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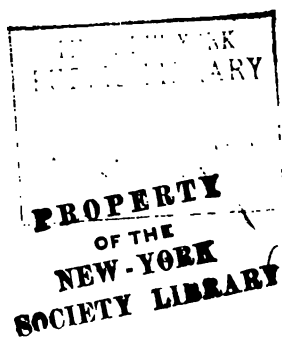


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"WELL, THAT WAS QUICKLY OVER," HE SAID

# ***THE LOVERS OF SANNA***

A NOVEL BY  
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NEW YORK  
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IF

TO  
JANET



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**THE LOVERS OF  
SANNA**





# THE LOVERS OF SANNA

## CHAPTER ONE

**J**ULIAN CARTWRIGHT sat leaning forward in his chair in the parlor-car to catch the light from the dim lamp above, while the sharp snow rattled from out the darkness on the window-panes. In his big, loose-dragging, unbuttoned overcoat, with his soft felt gray hat pushed back on his head, he had an almost aggressively American appearance that contrasted oddly with something indefinitely foreign about him beside the dark tan of his face and the cut of his brown mustache. He showed the extreme Americanism of a dweller in an alien land, who yet unconsciously assimilates some of the atmosphere of it.

He was silently laughing over a story in

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the periodical he held, his very white teeth shining under his mustache and his shoulders shaking with the irrepressible convulsion of his mirth, when looking up suddenly his eyes met, reflected in the mirror ahead, the amused eyes of the young woman just behind him. The meeting was so instantaneous that she was not able, until the fraction of a second later, to deflect her gaze just that hair's breadth to one side that made it entirely impersonal, and almost left a doubt as to whether it had been fixed on him at all—almost, but not quite.

Cartwright, occupied now stealthily in an inventorial excursion in the looking-glass, saw that she held in her own hand a copy of the periodical he was reading. That accounted for the evident touch of comradeship in her amusement; she had been laughing with, not at, him. For the rest, she was—as he had noted almost subconsciously on taking his seat two hours

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ago—beautiful, with a warm, glowing, velvety beauty that made itself felt at once indeed, wherever she went, men's heads turning instinctively as she passed by.

Cartwright noticed now, in the growing chill of the car, the effect of warm richness in the dull heather-colored cloth and the fur of her attire, in which she seemed cozily bestowed as in a nest, her black hat with its soft plumes coming close down over her head and the dark fur meeting it.

The quality of her beauty was such that the more somberly she was clad, the more startling it appeared. So warm, so richly dowered, so replete with all the good and the luxury of life, so sufficient in herself she seemed, that it would have been hard indeed for anyone to have guessed the chill and doubt and loneliness of her mood.

Susanna Corbin had been in love for three years with a man who, she had found since, did not care for her, though every-

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one still took it for granted that he did. She was, as she had discovered too late to-day, invited to the Cedars over this Sunday especially because he was to be there. It was the irony of fate that she, who had been the recipient of so many men's attentions, should have given her heart to the one man who didn't seem to want it.

At first—until this very last year, indeed, when he had almost dropped out of her life—she had believed implicitly that he cared; he had appeared to! Her mind, as she sat here, was going over desolately, as it had a way of doing in unoccupied moments, the hours of the past, in those three years when they were so much together.

They had had the same modern literary tastes; they had begun by talking of Wells and Shaw and Maeterlinck and Ibsen; her friend was a notable scientist, and she was proud to be singled out by him, the mere fact gave her an intellectual stimulus. He

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was a man one consciously strove to please, he had "ways" of his own. But he was kindness itself; their first real meeting had been just after the death of her mother, he had suffered the same loss himself in the near past, and he was sorry for her intimately, the way nobody else seemed to be. That was why he had come to see her so often, and made her take walks with him and brought her books to read. They had talked deeply of scientific problems, and those of humanity.

She lived with her brother and his wife; it wasn't always a joy, but she had felt in the heart-to-heart companionship with Hobart Cloud how temporary and unimportant all her discomforts were. And then . . . this last year in some strange, unbelievable way she had seen next to nothing of him.

She had eaten her heart out at first waiting for him to come, with that harrowing



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fear that she had done something to displease him. But it wasn't that. He had been fond of her—yes! she knew that—but not so fond of her as she had had, perhaps, the right to think; the impetus had worn itself out, it hadn't been strong enough to "carry," beautiful and desirable as she was. She bore him no ill will for it; why should she? If he couldn't love her it wasn't his fault that she wasn't lovable enough.

She had always looked with wonder and antipathy, not unmixed with amusement, at certain women of her acquaintance who posed stagily as being madly "in love" with some unresponsive star of the literary or artistic world. No one would ever be able to say such a thing of her.

Yet sometimes her sturdy self-knowledge overbore the humility of her reproach—she felt protectingly sorry for him, she said vindicatingly:

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“I really am nice enough for even him to love; it is a pity for both of us that he loses more than he will ever know.”

The worst of it was that when you had once let yourself care for a man as nice as that there seemed no reason why you should ever stop caring for him, except the insignificant one that he didn't love in return.

“That is not love which alters where it alteration finds—”

She tried to see herself caring for him indefinitely, making his happiness her secret prayer in the dull gray of her days, his welfare her religion, so that all the good that came to him would be a part of her. That was the highest way, the way any woman might be proud to love!

“That's not true love that only loves for gain—

That is true love that loves in spite of pain:

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So would I love him then, that I may be  
Worthy his loving, though he love not  
me."

Yes, but when she came down to it she didn't know whether she wanted to be so good as that! Why couldn't she exert the bewitching, compelling qualities some girls used, and make him know in spite of himself that he wanted her? . . . That was not for her either. She was indomitably, fastidiously proud, she could desire no love that had to be compelled—she must be sought; she could never, never seek!

So often in this desolate, heart-wringing year she had gone over all this as she was doing now; she longed, yet she dreaded to meet Hobart Cloud to-night, as one dreads having a hard-won peace disturbed.

The train that had been halting momentarily in the drifting snow came suddenly to a full stop and the lights of a station

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came dimly into view through the white storm; the brakeman put his head in at the door and called out "Dawsons!" and she rose to her feet at the same instant that Cartwright sprang to his, clutching wildly for his suit-case as he hailed the passing conductor, demanding hotly:

"Why didn't you stop at Merewood?"

"We did," said the other surlily. "It's a signal station, we don't wait, we only stop for a moment. I can't help it if passengers don't know where they want to get off."

"Nobody called out the name!" said Cartwright furiously as he jumped down on the platform. He strode to the other side of the station, his soft hat clapped on one side of his head, his unbuttoned overcoat flying open, swinging his heavy suit-case in one hand as he peered unavailingly into the snow-driven landscape for the sign of a cab or a sleigh. A hurried

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visit to the ticket agent in the waiting-room quenched all hope of procuring any. As he strode out again across the platform, he started and turned as he heard a breathless voice beside him:

"I beg your pardon! This is Mr. Cartwright, isn't it? I couldn't help seeing the name on your magazine. I'm Susanna Corbin, Richard Corbin's sister."

She paused slightly at his quick acknowledgment, before going on hurriedly:

"I think we are both bound for the Throops'. I heard that you were invited there; that is why I got out now when you did. How are we to get to Merewood?"

"Did you also give notice to the conductor that you wanted to stop there, Miss Corbin?" asked Cartwright in a tone that forcibly expressed his opinion of the incident.

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“No; I happened to have an old ticket for Brightstown, farther on; when I heard you notify him I supposed that would be enough.”

“It ought to have been,” said Cartwright grimly. His secretly appraising glance had been adjusting her from the position of a passing stranger to that of the sister of Richard Corbin, whose business methods he did not like. She must be the “Sanna” Corbin of whom he dimly remembered to have heard as a beauty, before he left for South America over three years ago.

“I’ve been inquiring inside, as you must have seen, but the wires are down so we can’t telephone anywhere. If we had only gone on to Brightstown we could have hired a sleigh, but at this deserted, one-horse place—” he made a little foreign gesture of hopelessness. “The only thing for me to do is to walk on to the Throops’—I’ve been inquiring the way, it isn’t over two

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miles, if it's that—and get something in which to drive you back.”

“Oh, please don't!” cried Sanna in alarm. “I don't want to be left. Why can't I walk with you?”

Cartwright looked out into the whirling whiteness of the storm and shook his head.

“The drifts are pretty high in places and it's very cold. I'm afraid it would be too much for you.”

“Oh, no, it wouldn't, I can walk—truly I can!” She unconsciously came closer to him. “And you see for yourself that I'm wrapped up. Please, *please*, don't leave me here!”

“Very well,” said Cartwright, smiling a little at the childish intensity of her appeal. “I won't leave you; we'll make a dash for the pole together. Give me your valise.”

“You can't carry two in this storm; mine is so large.”

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"I could, but then I mightn't be able to help you along; I'm going to leave mine with the ticket agent, Throop can put me up until to-morrow."

"It seems too bad," she began protestingly, but he had already disappeared inside the door and came out buttoning up his big coat for action.

"Well, that's settled. Are you all ready?" His eye swept approvingly over her dark furriness. "Let me help you down this slippery step. Now!"

The fierce wind caught them in the face, the sharp-driving snow stung cheeks and eyelids as they turned into the road. The misty lights of the lamp-posts revealed the woods on either side, alternating at intervals with dim houses set far back in shrubbery. The drifts were so high that even with Cartwright's helping arm Sanna found herself at times floundering impatiently before she could go on again. Her



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breath came short and fast, every few moments they were obliged to stop, and turning, take the wind on their back.

After a while he made her walk behind him in the tracks he ploughed for her, his body partially shielding her from the force of the storm. She pitched and plunged, but there was a certain quality of gameness in all her efforts that made itself alluringly felt. Cartwright, whenever he looked around anxiously, met a breathless but brilliantly reassuring smile. As they reached a large stone gateway he whirled her around to the farther side of the high posts for shelter, and bent his big over-coated, snow-covered figure to shield her still more.

“Rest here for a few moments,” he ordered. “Let me brush some of the snow off of you. Are you cold?”

“No indeed!”

“This is a change for me. I’ve been in

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South America for the last three years, I only got back a couple of months ago."

"Oh, weren't you glad to get home again?"

"I was crazy over the idea beforehand, I could hardly wait for the steamer, but—turn around for a moment here, before the wind takes you."

"And don't you like it as much as you thought?"

Cartwright hesitated. "Well, you see, I haven't anybody belonging to me now but distant cousins; they seem glad to see me—they're very nice. Yes—I've nothing to complain of at all. But when one is away one thinks of it all the time as Home, and I didn't realize until I was on the spot that there's no home that's mine; I stop at the best hotel here just as I would in Paris or London, or Rio, or Santiago. The best hotel is approximately the same all over the world. People are awfully good to me,

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they invite me out for dinner, or for a night or two, but if it wasn't that business called me I doubt if it would have been worth my while to return, even for this short time."

"Do you go back soon?"

"At the end of this coming week; just a week from to-day! We might start on again now, it doesn't seem to be snowing quite so hard."

Sanna plodded on once more, aware of a certain sureness and pleasure in his presence, even though her mind was still subconsciously full of the man she was to see to-night. There was a simple openness, a frankness of expression about Cartwright, that was in its way a novelty; most of the men of her social world seemed to be putting their real subjects of interest aside when they talked to her—when they turned to speak to other men there was an unconscious change of tone, as if they then spoke with real freedom. Hobart Cloud

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went beyond this; he had a hampering yet fascinating habit of courteously saying the very opposite of what he inwardly meant, and having to be translated.

“Do you know that you’re an awfully plucky girl?” asked Cartwright suddenly.

She laughed and shook her head. “Oh, no, I’m not! I never have courage to do anything by myself, it’s only when there’s somebody to show me how.”

“You need a pace-maker,” returned Cartwright, pleased in some way. “They’ll probably have finished dinner by the time we get to the Throops’, but we can’t help that, we’re going as fast as we can. Heavens above! what’s that?”

As he spoke a series of blood-curdling shrieks in a woman’s voice, now waning, now waxing violently louder, rent the air, proceeding from a house at one side, whose glimmering lights were visible through the shrubbery. A momentary cessation was

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followed by a chorus of childish wails before the yells broke out again with increasing vigor.

"I know what that is, it's hysteria," said Cartwright, in a tone of relieved conviction, after a few moments of listening. "You needn't be frightened. Why on earth doesn't someone do something to stop her?"

At that moment the door of the house flew open revealing a brightly lighted hall, and the figure of a distraught maid who peered into the darkness as she screamed:

"Help! Help! Help!"

"Can we be of any assistance?" asked Cartwright, coming rapidly up to the front steps with Sanna close behind him.

"Jesus, Mary and Joseph!" said the maid, with inconceivable rapidity. "Sure, I never saw youse before. But if you can stop her, the saints be with you! Her and Himself's not home yet to dinner, and

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me alone in the house with the children, and Teresa gone out of her mind this afternoon cooking so close over the fire all day. Hark to her now! She falls to the floor unconscious-like and then she does be up destroyin' herself agin' the furniture. O-o-o-o-h!"

"Be still," said Cartwright peremptorily, pushing past her into the hall. "I'll settle this, I'm a doctor." He turned explanatorily to Sanna: "I only practiced medicine for a year after taking my degree, but I know what to do here. Let me brush you off—there, now we're both ready for action. Now — you—what's your name?"

"Ellen, sir."

"Well, Ellen, I'll find my way to Teresa. I want you to run a bathtub half full of warm water immediately, before you go to her. I'll ask you to come with me, Miss Corbin, I may need you."

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He was already hastening up the Colonial staircase in the direction of the noise. Sanna followed, past the darkened rooms on the second landing to the top floor, where through an open doorway could be seen the figure of a very large woman with streaming hair, closed eyes and drawn face, pitching from side to side wildly like a ship in a storm, and screaming with increased frenzy.

“Poor thing, she’s having a hard time,” said Cartwright as Sanna entered the room. “Be quiet now, Teresa, we are not going to hurt you.” He dodged with unimpaired gravity a flail-like arm of the afflicted one as he spoke, and gripped her firmly into enforced quietude. “Be quiet now—we’re going to have you all right soon.” His tone was peremptory but reassuring; his touch gentle in its firmness.

“Ah, here’s Ellen already. Miss Corbin, if you could hold one foot, while Ellen

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takes off her shoe—now the other. Thank you. We won't try to get off anything else, this is a cotton frock she has on, anyway. We'll have to carry her down between us, I'm afraid. I'll take her shoulders if you two can manage her feet."

Sanna had no time to wonder, as with the tormented woman between them, stiff and shrieking, they went at snail-like pace step by step down the stairs in laborious procession, until they reached the bathroom and deposited their patient safely in the tub at last.

Her tense muscles relaxed at once; as by magic the screaming ceased. When she finally came out of the warm bath, tearful and apologetic and weak, she was able, with a blanket wrapped around her, to totter back to her room, supported on either side by Cartwright and Ellen, with explicit directions from him as to the patient's further care before the two intruders de-



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scended the stairs once more. They both looked instinctively at a clock in the hall that had marked half-past seven at their entrance. The whole episode had not taken fifteen minutes.

"Well, that was over quickly," he asserted with a smile at his companion. "I want to thank you very much, Miss Corbin, you were a fine assistant."

"I think *you* were wonderful!"

"Oh, no! that was easy." He hesitated. "We'll be late anyway at the Throops'—would you mind waiting here a few minutes to see if the owners return?"

"Certainly not."

"Not that I want any thanks, but I think perhaps I'd better tell them about the maid's condition. We might as well go in and sit down."

"Very well. Perhaps they'll send us back in their limousine, Ellen just said they were in one. They ought to be very

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"~~grateful~~ to you," remarked Sanna, as they went into a large, lighted room across the hall at the end of which was a small dining-table set for two. A couple of enormous logs burned and crackled in the stone chimney-place, on either side of which a big leather armchair was drawn up; a davenport to match occupied a place opposite under a high window with leaded panes. There was a long low sideboard, covered with old-fashioned silver, and built into the wall by the fireplace a glass-enclosed book-case. This was evidently a living-room as well as a place in which to eat.

Sanna sank down half timidly in one of the big armchairs.

"You'd better throw off your wraps, you'll not feel them when you go out," he suggested after a moment.

"Yes, I will," said Sanna, obeying, and afterwards leaning back luxuriously; without her cloak and her furs her figure

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in its dark gown looked extraordinarily trim and graceful, it seemed to Cartwright, and her face very brilliant in the firelight, under her dark hat against the high leather background of the chair; he smiled at her in an unconcealed all-around sort of approbation both of the action and her appearance, and she smiled back agreeably warmed by it. It needs no words to tell a woman when a man likes her; she was pleased now that Cartwright did.

"It's like a fairy tale," she suggested, with a wave of her hand around the room. "This fire, the two chairs, the table prepared for us—in a moment, no doubt, the dinner will appear for two, served by unseen hands."

"I don't know that I altogether like the idea; I'd hate to have you turn into a White Cat," said Cartwright gravely.

"I couldn't! I can't stand cats, especially white ones. No, if I turn into any-

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thing it will be—" The words died on her lips.

"What?" questioned Cartwright, and gasped as his eyes followed the direction of hers.

"Good heavens!"

Down the hall stairway were appearing, one behind the other, as they clung to the balusters, three amazingly small children, in white night-drawers with sewed-up feet. A tiny boy with short brown curls came last; the smallest, a tot who seemed hardly over a year old, with one flaxen ringlet on its forehead, was in the middle, and leading the two, came a wee girl with a resolute expression and floating golden hair, holding clasped to her what looked to be a large doll, wrapped in the folds of a pink and white checked table-cover.

The three filed silently into the room, and stood in a row looking at the two guests with calm, unconcerned gaze, which ar-

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gued that the presence of visitors was not an unaccustomed incident.

“Are you going to stay all night?” asked the little girl with the golden hair, shifting the table-cover so that it brought to view instead of the supposed doll the upper half of an Indian club.

“No,” answered Sanna, “I’m not.”

“My dolly s’leeps in the pink spare room bed,” stated the little girl, leaning forward on tiptoe, and fixing Sanna with a gaze that became delightfully sly in its blue innocence. “She won’t let me tell anybody.” With the words she suddenly dropped the Indian club on the floor with a loud bang, and running across the room climbed into a chair by the sideboard, abstracted a slender, old-fashioned silver teapot from thence, wrapped it up in its turn in the pink and white table-cover, and established herself with it comfortably in the corner of the davenport.

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The little boy, after a momentary inspection of the guests, had gone straight to a small side table on which was a bowl of sugar, and, abstracting a lump, had thrown it over in the corner and then dropped himself on all fours, searching after it with growlings and predatory shakings of the head.

"Lap!" suddenly demanded the mite left standing by Sanna, backing, with a flaxen ring showing on the nape of its neck to match the one on its forehead. "Lap!"

"Come up, then, you pet thing!" cried Sanna joyously, lifting the baby into the warm cuddling circle of her arms. "Isn't she a dear?" She appealed to Cartwright.

"She knows what she wants," he answered, laughing.

"Norfin bo," said the infant imperiously.

"What, darling?"

"Norfin bo!"

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"She wants norfin bo," explained the little sister on the sofa.

"But I don't know what that is, dear."

"Norfin bo! *Norfin bo!*"

The child on the sofa slipped down from it, and scampering upstairs came down again with a book of nursery rhymes, which she thrust open into Sanna's hand at a colored page, before going back to her position with the draped teapot.

"Oh!" said Sanna, enlightened. She began at once:

" 'The north wind doth blow—'

The baby put its head down contentedly on her arm, and stuck its thumb in its mouth.

" 'And we shall have snow,  
And what will Robin do then, poor  
thing?

He'll hop in a barn,  
To keep himself warm,  
And hide his head under his wing,

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Poor thing!' ”

The baby took its thumb out of its mouth as the verse came to an end, and ordered again:

“Norfin bo! Norfin bo!”

“‘The north wind doth blow—’ ”

Cartwright sat leaning forward in his big American overcoat with his foreign air, his head on his hand, taking in the scene as Sanna read the verse over and over again. The child on the sofa was obliviously cuddling and talking to her extemporized dolly; the little boy in the corner of the room, still on all fours, occasionally showed his brown curly head and red cheeks as he kept on growling at and baiting more lumps of sugar. The children were a little elfin race apart, as deeply absorbed in their own thrilling unrealities as if no other world than theirs existed.

As Cartwright's gaze rested on his com-



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panion, the grace of her pose in the leaping firelight, the lines of her beautiful protecting figure, the tenderness of her bent head, the darkness of the long lashes that touched the rich flush on her cheeks while her low voice murmured on, made themselves more and more felt; she looked a goddess. He wondered involuntarily how she had ever been allowed to escape marriage till now, with an unexpected twinge of regret that his own departure was for a term of years.

Suddenly there was a noise outside as of the slamming of a carriage door, followed by feet stamping on the piazza, and two voices apparently talking at once in high dispute. At the first sound the child on the davenport slipped to the floor, and the little boy rose from all fours; both together whisked the half-sleeping infant from Sanna's lap, and scrambling with incredible swiftness up the stairs, disap-

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peared from view as the front door opened, and a small blond lady in an enormous white hat and feather boa, accompanied by a cavernous-eyed, tall, dark gentleman entered, evidently still violently under the absorbing influence of a quarrel. They were almost in the dining-room before they caught sight of the uninvited guests, and stopped short with an exclamation of annoyed surprise.

"You have made a mistake," said the lady peremptorily. "To-morrow is the night of Mr. Bainbury's Talk."

"I beg your pardon," said Cartwright coming forward, while Sanna hastily donned her wraps. "Our appearance here needs an explanation. My name is Cartwright. Your cook has been suffering from hysteria, and her screams frightened your other maid so much that she ran out calling for help just as Miss Corbin and myself happened to be passing on our way to

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the Throops', whom you perhaps know. As I have been a physician I came in at the maid's appeal, and did what I could to relieve your cook, who is resting quietly now. I thought it best to wait and tell you this personally, and also to leave a few directions with you if you cared to have them."

"Thank you," said the lady indifferently, "you're very kind, I'm sure, but it was quite unnecessary to trouble yourself. Teresa always gets over these fits herself."

Her eyes were roving around the room while Cartwright was speaking; she swooped suddenly now upon the discarded Indian club, her voice rising. "Has Ellen let those children come down here *again?*"

"I told Ellen to stay with the cook," said Cartwright apologetically. "The children were with us."

"Much obliged," said the gentleman

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wanderingly, speaking for the first time. He patted the pockets of his coat in ineffectual search. "I'm sorry I can't offer you a cigar; I seem to have smoked 'em all."

"Oh, pray don't trouble yourself," protested Cartwright in his turn. He picked up the valise in the hall, with Sanna close beside him. "I think we'll go on at once, we're late for dinner as it is. Good-night!"

If there was any answering salutation it was not heard; by the sounds that followed, the two seemed to drop back at once into their quarrel. The unwelcome guests walked out into the cold, soberly and silently. The wind was not blowing so hard, the snow fell more gently, and the way seemed easier after the rest, as they plodded on, Cartwright ahead and Sanna following in his footsteps. Neither broke the stillness until he exclaimed blankly,

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as if after deep and unenlightening thought:

“Well, what an *extraordinary* household!”

“Don’t,” said Sanna in a strangled voice. He turned around quickly to see her standing stock-still. “If you make me laugh now I won’t be able to walk a step. ‘Extraordinary!’ I should think it was. Ha-ha-ha-ha.”

“Ha-ha-ha,” joined in Cartwright unexpectedly. The peals of their uncontrollable mirth rent the air, breaking out more wildly after momentary convulsive gasps of cessation; they surged and veered into the deep snow and out of it with gestures of helpless protest at the infernally tickling whip of remembrance. He reached back once to help her up when she sank weak-kneed into a drift, and her hair caught into a button of his coat and came loose in a long curling strand, hang-

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ing down at the side of her deeply rosed cheek.

It was thus, half covered with snow, that they made their recklessly hilarious appearance at last, before the circle gathered around the Throops' dinner table, and Sanna's heart gave a sudden throb as she met the startled, admiring eyes of Hobart Cloud.

## CHAPTER TWO

“**T**HAT *was* funny,” said Sanna in the tone of one who defiantly re-asserts a disputed fact.

“Well, I should say so,” agreed Cartwright with an answering smile.

It was Sunday afternoon, and the two had just met in the wide hall; Sanna had paused before entering the library, with one hand on the heavy red portières, close drawn to keep in the heat of the fire; a snowy light streamed through the big window opposite, against which Cartwright’s strong figure was darkly outlined as he bent toward her, his browned face with its nice eyes frankly alight at the meeting.

Sanna recognized, with a swift, pleased, half-amused sense of relief from an inner

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strain, that he was intensely matter-of-fact and direct in everything he did, so that one felt inspired to meet him on his own ground. She was pale for her, with some exquisite languor in her expression and manner; even as she smiled her eyes had a misty look under those dark lashes that Cartwright was quick enough to note at once.

This was the first moment they had been alone together since their startling entrance the night before, though their eyes had met more than once in secret reminiscently-amused recognition, all the more intimate because, after the first hurried, disconnected words of explanation, the tale of their adventure had proved unexpectedly and mysteriously impossible of narration when, after a hasty renovating, the two had reappeared at the dinner table. Their presence was hailed as a reinforcement—Sanna's especially by the



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men, who each claimed her as an adherent—in an absorbing conversation on Christian Science, about which subject each person was deeply engaged in expressing his or her views, the gentle, winning Mrs. Graham hotly alleging the most lurid malpractice, while the two black-browed, white-teethed millionaire Dennings, brother and sister, smilingly expounded the beauties and benefits of a Higher Plane. Alfred Long, a young lawyer of prominence, with his fair hair a-Pompadour, contributed effective Instances on either side, and the willowy, coquettish-eyed Miss Tyler, with a lisp and long pearl earrings, kept asking with deep insistence, If you didn't feel that Anything was of value if it made you Think. Hobart Cloud, for his part, was busily engaged in lucidly helping out the incoherent arguments of earnest Mrs. Stanways, a young widow and a settlement worker—and probably, as Sanna

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humorously felt, saying exactly what he didn't mean. Throop, the host, who usually brought a cheery element that fused his guests in lighter mood, was upstairs with a toothache, and his wife was always absent-minded in company, with an obscure effect now of counting spoons, or the times the sauce hadn't been passed, or the number of people who didn't take coffee.

After Sanna and Cartwright had been commiserated loudly for their tramp in the snow, and found out that the house at which they had stopped was the Bainbury's, with the additional information that you never could tell how that foolish little Bainbury woman would act, the subject seemed to be of no further interest to anyone; the little adventure had no place then or later; at any attempt to describe their entrance or the scenes that followed it seemed to change color unexpectedly in

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some way, and become not only foolish, but almost vulgar—the kind of thing, to their hearers, that nice people didn't do.

Yet it had at least passed these two over the outer barriers of acquaintance; Sanna as she stood now by the portières with the noise of conversation within, voiced the sentiment, with the pleased sense of carrying on a dual experience amid an uncomprehending world.

“Those children and that astounding mother! I laugh whenever I think of them. When I woke up this morning I felt as if I had really known you for a long time.”

Cartwright held out his hand. “Shake, please!” he said triumphantly. “So did I.”

They both shook hands cordially, as he continued:

“I thought I was never going to get a chance to speak to you ever any more!

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You know I sail at the end of the week. I do want to tell you what a brick I think you were all through everything last evening. Can't you come out with me for a little walk in the snow before sunset?

"No, I'm afraid not. I'm sorry—but I'm going to read with Mr. Cloud."

"Oh!" said Cartwright. An indefinable change came over his face as his eyes dwelt on her upturned one. "Then don't say you're sorry, say you're glad. Speak truth to me!" he warned half reprovingly.

"Very well, I will," returned Sanna with a slight access of dignity. "I *am* glad to read with Mr. Cloud, but I'm really sorry not to walk with you, too."

"Thank you," said Cartwright with frank pleasure, holding aside the curtains for her as she passed through. "I'll think of this time next Sunday, when I'm on the water going far away."

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Cartwright's "Say you're glad," brought a flush to her face after she had left him; she wondered if everybody saw as plainly as he. She had, without knowing it, the little belonging look when Hobart Cloud was near, the quick instinctive motion when he spoke, and the swift pleasure when he spoke well, that were the involuntary signs of proprietorship.

To get one's wish when one least expects it, to ride not only on the high wave of popularity with others, but to be openly sought by the man with whom one is secretly in love, seems as if it must bring the height of happiness. Sanna could only feel now that she had never been so strangely tired in her life. Hobart Cloud's low voiced: "Sanna, it's good to see you again," the night before had brought the quick color to her face, his evident desire for her society to-day was tremblingly sweet, yet strangely unset-

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ting. To sit by him while he read in that delightful voice of his, to watch the poise of his fine head, the gentle curve of his lips, that slight yet somehow embracing curve of his body toward her, seemed in the very pleasure of it to bring back that terrible reiterant quality of pain, that she knew, oh, so well!—the familiar sinking of the heart, the wistful sensitive, humbled striving of a naturally proud spirit to please his still more, and more; the knowledge of the long nights when she had, hot cheeked, wept and agonized on her pillow, after those long unbelievable days—following the deepest mutual confidence!—when she had waited and waited and waited for him, and he hadn't come—not, as she knew, because he didn't want to come, but because any light cause deflected him.

Hobart Cloud was thirty-five, long-limbed, long-faced, with thoughtful dark

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eyes and a distinguished presence. He came of an old and honorable family, and he lived on the small income of his inheritance. He was a man of high breeding, high mind, high attainments; in his own scientific field he was alert and keen. But socially he was so selflessly patient that he provokingly wasted hours of courteous converse or attention on people whom he knew but little, or who bored him, while those whose society he preferred, and who really cared for him, went to the wall. He had that finely organized temperament that seemed so simple that few recognized the complexities below, or that his unvarying polite consideration covered an extreme fastidiousness. Those who knew this often lost their expected satisfaction in his society because it was impossible to know whether, after all, he was really pleased, or as heartily so at the end of an interview as he had

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been at the beginning, because that thin film of courtesy interposed itself so successfully between his inner personality and that of others; on those delightful occasions when it vanished entirely it seemed to be from some quick, warming light from within that glowed over the one who had called it forth, and made every woman, at least, long indefinitely to bathe in it; even to sue for it again! In his utmost gentleness he gave an unconsciously vivid impression of the innate Superiority of Man. He had showed this warming light to Sanna so many times that when he hid it, it was no wonder she felt a mortal chill.

Now, as ever, when he showed an inclination to appropriate her, other men, no matter how much they might strive for Sanna's attention if he stayed away, tacitly kept in the background.

They had been together all the morning



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talking and reading in the peculiarly intimate way that had always been theirs, one paragraph seeming to start a conversation that covered wide stretches of thought, or observations of character, or delightful dual reminiscences, exactly as if it had not been nearly a year since they had been together thus. Now, however, after a while he put down the book as the dusk set in, and the library became entirely deserted.

“Sanna—”

“Yes.”

“You have grown very beautiful.”

“I am glad you think so,” she said banally.

“You always were beautiful, of course; but there’s something new, something different about you. I used to think that I knew you very well. You have an effect of having lived—and gained some high and lovely secret out of it.”

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Sanna said nothing; she could not. Her deep blue eyes gazed straight before her with an inscrutable expression until his gaze at last impelled her to meet it—she smiled slightly at the ironic thought that it was his hurt to her that had made her more attractive to him—and he bent over and touched the soft hair on her forehead with his long fingers, smoothing it with a caressing tenderness.

She had given herself to him passionately in her heart before when he had smoothed her hair in this way—she loved him now, but his touch filled her with a strange sadness and trembling, a fear of being moved, while yet she desired it. In another moment she might cry and he would hate it, and that would be horrible.

Sanna had always had the limpidly truthful unreserve, the open candor of mind that shows through any speech, and which perhaps only the very highest kind

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of man can fully appreciate; her enigmatic smile and her silence now heightened the drawing powers of this new mystery.

“What have you been doing with yourself lately?” she asked defensively. “How do the experiments get on?”

“Finely!” He was a man who, in contradistinction to the accepted idea of men, seldom talked about himself, and more rarely still—to women at least—of what most absorbed him. It had been one of Sanna’s triumphs that he had talked of such things with her; she had been deeply interested in his work. He glowed over her now as he began—paying her, as she felt, the highest compliment in his power—to narrate the different gradations by which he had approached his latest chemical discovery, and she tried to comprehend the technical process of thought and details—no facile assent on her part deceived him!—while she sat absorbed in

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listening to the delightful murmur of his voice, woman-like, caring little for what he told, in comparison with the fact that he was telling it to her. His half amused, penetrative yet insistent—"No, no, *no!* You don't really understand at all, I see; let me explain it to you more fully," found her out each time, and wouldn't let her escape; her attention had to be pinned to what he wished her to hear. She reaped her reward in his approval when she made a mighty effort and responded intelligently.

"You have a mind, Sanna, when you take the trouble to use it. I've always appreciated that. You need to be kept up to the mark, though; I shall see that you are in future. There you are with that delightfully mysterious smile again!" He stopped and looked at her with a tender thoughtfulness.

"I didn't realize, Sanna, until I saw you

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come in last night, how much I'd missed you in these last months. But I'm not going to lose you again, dear; never again!"

This time Sanna did not smile; her eyes dropped. It was one of those tense moments when they were very near together. Her heart beat, yet unwillingly; she feared to speak, lest what she said might not fit in with his mood, it might be the wrong thing. After a long pause he spoke abruptly—so like him!—in an entirely different tone of voice.

"Who is this Mr. Cartwright?"

"Why, don't you like him?" asked Sanna with quick resentment at something implied.

"My dear girl, I don't know the man."

"Well, you know about as much of him as I do," said Sanna. "I believe he knew Richard once. He is here on business from South America; I only met him

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coming out on the train yesterday evening."

"Oh, I see! One of those people who become very intimate on short acquaintance."

"Intimate! He was very nice to me last night, but I've hardly spoken to him since I've been here," exclaimed Sanna, surprised.

Hobart raised his eyebrows.

"Indeed!" he said indifferently. "It struck me several times that he had a very intimate way of looking at you; though possibly it is the South American fashion when one admires a woman."

"Why, *Hobart!*"

"But"—his courtesy reasserted itself as he smiled once more at her—"as you evidently like him, Sanna, I take back all criticism." He gave a gesture of impatience at the sound of nearing voices outside.

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"Are those unnecessary people coming in from their walk already?"

"They seem to be. I must go and dress," said Sanna hastily, rising.

He rose, too, taking her hands in his as he stood looking down at her from his height. "Ah, Sanna, come back soon! I don't want to lose a moment more of you than I have to," he said with deep feeling; a momentary, beautiful, irradiating warmth encompassed her before she slipped her hands from his and went from the room. After all, her beating heart told her she had pleased him as much at the end of the afternoon as at the beginning; she had pleased him—very much.

She had her place by him at dinner, with Cartwright opposite; there was all the "little joy" of feeling near Hobart, in the midst of the general conversation, but although he had asked her to come



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back to him soon, he let her slip from him afterwards!

Mrs. Throop had waylaid him as soon as the meal was over, and sat down with him at once on a sofa in the drawing-room, where her monotonous voice could be heard in the intervals of the music or conversation or laughter, in long, plaintive confidences on the subject of her husband, beginning with: "How do you think Gerald looks this winter, Hobart? The doctor tells him he oughtn't to work so hard, but Gerald says—" mixed in with equally voluminous confidences on the younger Gerald's progress at boarding school, and the unsatisfactoriness of the chauffeur, and the difficulties in house-keeping made by the snow.

Sanna, as usual, was the center of a group. All the light in the room seemed focused on her, as she sat lazily leaning back on the end of a wide divan; her

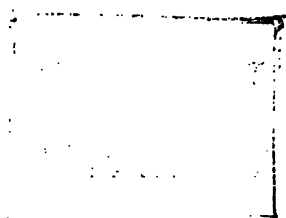
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rose colored velvet gown was cut half low in the neck, her exquisite feet in their rose colored slippers were slightly crossed as they swung clear of the floor; and her rounded white arms folded on the cushion behind her head, made a frame for her glowing beauty—her laughing, deep blue eyes, her lovely, soft, straying dark hair, the richness of her rosed cheeks, and her red mobile lips; other women beside her looked washed out, or thick in complexion and figure.

Throop, who had recovered from his toothache, was in his accustomed, openly proclaimed, position as Sanna's chief devotee, Denning and Long disputing it with him, while Miss Tyler, seated also on the divan, had at least the semblance of being within the zone of popularity. The black-browed, heavy-chinned young Denning was extremely susceptible to the softer emotions; he couldn't play



SANNA, AS USUAL, WAS THE CENTER OF A GROUP



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at being ardent without becoming so, nor feign being injured without really being injured. It took art, experience, wit, on Sanna's part to hold him competently in hand and keep him from becoming almost rudely serious at times, while she swung the others along at the pace already set, saying little herself, yet keeping all at their best. The evening was going, going while she waited—waited, as ever! For what? The sickening, accustomed thought was like pressure on a burn. Whenever she looked up she saw the eyes of two men fastened on her: those of Hobart Cloud from the sofa at the end of the room where he sat with his hostess, and Cartwright's from his point of vantage just opposite, where he hung over the piano, talking to Miss Denning as her fingers wandered softly over the keys into chords, and scraps of melody. For all he had, as Sanna had more than once noticed, a little odd ap-

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pearance of fitting into the social requirements by taking particular thought, he had also a natural ease of manner in contradistinction to this slight stiffness of adaption—there was no self-consciousness about him once he had decided on what was required of him. He was apparently enjoying his talk with Miss Denning; why should he watch *her*? Once he smiled as their eyes met, and she felt something masculinely warming in the recognition; it seemed to say: “I am really just as mindful of you as I was last night, only the circumstances are different.”

“Awfully nice fellow, Cartwright,” said Throop confidentially, as his glance followed Sanna’s. “You two had an odd sort of a time together last night, I hear. Denning, Miss Tyler is speaking to you.”

“I was very fortunate to meet Mr. Cartwright,” said Sanna. “Have you known him long?”

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"My younger brother and he were boys together. Of course, he has been away for the last five years or six years, we haven't seen much of him. I was telling him to-day that he ought to stay home now; he came on with some such idea, I thought, but he seems to have given it up. He is the kind of a fellow that you hate to lose when you've once got hold of him again, he has a real quality in him—didn't you feel it?"

"Yes, I did," said Sanna, and added to herself: "If *he* wanted to speak to me he would find the way to do it," with the bitter thought that Hobart wouldn't, in his fatal, mistaken politeness, have the courage to excuse himself from Mrs. Throop and come over to her now if he knew that it was the last time he should see her in this world!

But it is dangerous to count too much on consistency in anyone; even while she

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was thinking thus both men rose almost at the same instant, and came forward to the group, Cartwright to say:

“Don’t you people want to look at the moon on the snow? We’ve been catching a glimpse of it through the opening in the curtain.”

But Hobart bent over her as he murmured:

“May I have a moment with you, Sanna?”

“Yes, yes, of course.”

He drew her to one side as the others trooped into the hall. Sanna saw with bewilderment that he did not look like himself; there was a glitter in his eye, a strange redness in his face, an effect of smoldering anger that yet was not at her, for he drew her hand almost roughly to his lips and kissed it, as he said:

“I don’t care to talk to you with other people around. Do you know I have to



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leave here in a few minutes for the thirty train? I go east early in the morning, and won't be home until Thursday. That seems a long time! I want you to promise to be at home Thursday evening for me alone, Sanna." His glance flamed, yet pleaded, unfamiliarly.

"You don't speak!"

"Oh, I promise," Sanna murmured faintly.

But her feelings when she sought her room that night at last were not all of joy, even though she was so happy. Being with Hobart had always, as she phrased it, taken a lot out of her; the strain of this twenty-four hours had been greater than she knew. And though he thought he loved her to-night, would he think so on Thursday? That old terrible for-and-against, for-and-against, was beginning once more; it would have to be borne until Thursday came! She could only feel once

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more that she had never been so tired in her life.

And strangely persistent, with wearying, senseless repetition through all the force of her submerged emotions, came some words of Cartwright's when they were all saying good-night. There had been general regret expressed at Hobart's leaving. Cartwright's silence had moved her to ask lightly:

"Don't you like Mr. Cloud?"

And he had answered with cool emphasis, his dark eyebrows raised, and his lower lip protruding a little:

"No, I don't."

It was long before she slept, and when she awoke once in the black dark she found herself weeping in a loneliness greater than she had ever felt before for that poor Sanna who had suffered so much that nobody could ever know.

### *CHAPTER THREE*

**M**OST of the men left for town with Throop in the morning on the quarter of seven train. Miss Tyler had coquettishly made a function of being Dared to get up as early as that, and had triumphantly gone to town, loudly vaunting her exertions, with all the men, after the lamplit, scrambling, taciturn breakfast, inspired by the mistaken desire to carry on into the hard, business absorption of a newspaper-reading Monday morning, a lightly flirtatious conversation begun with Mr. Long late the night before while inspecting the moon. Miss Tyler was one of those unlightsome girls who imitate the caprices and whims of those who are attractive or popular, and from whom men, even while recognizing their good

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qualities, predestinedly flee. It was impossible to adequately discourage her, as she persistently believed that coldness on the part of any man covered a warmth that he didn't like to show. On this occasion Mr. Denning had secretly abetted her in hopes of spurring Sanna to join them. The latter, however, breakfasted in her room and did not come downstairs until it was time for the ten o'clock contingent to depart, the pretty, gentle Mrs. Stanways, Miss Denning and Cartwright waiting for the limousine that was to take them to the station over the hardened snow.

As he stood on the steps in his big overcoat and felt hat, with that strange little air of foreignness, it brought to her vividly their entrance together.

"I thought you'd gone!" she exclaimed with a surprise in which she frankly let her pleasure appear.

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His face reddened slightly under his dark skin.

“Without seeing you again? I’d have waited until night,” he asserted sturdily, while the women, including the hostess receiving adieus, mentally approved him.

He took the seat by Sanna—no parlor car this time—after punctiliously seeing to the others. He bought a morning paper for her at her expressed desire, and one for himself, as the newsboy passed; but neither made more than a pretense of reading. They sat side by side silently for a long time, Sanna in her soft, smooth plumage gazing out of the window abstractedly as they whirled through the snow-bound landscape, with its glimpses of the meaner ends of small towns, church spires, and sporadic, blank-windowed factories, languidly dreading yet falling prey to too-well known alternations of absorbing thought. She was tired of thinking,

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she dreaded going back home to her own room, where every inch of wall paper, every article in it, reminded her of the old conflict. She longed inexpressibly to see Hobart *now*, without waiting further. She turned around after a while and found Cartwright's glance fastened on her.

"I was wondering how long it would be before you would look up," he said.

"How foolish! When all you had to do was to speak to me," returned Sanna prosaically.

"I know, but I didn't want to speak until you did. I can't tell when I have been with any woman, that I knew, by whom I could sit like this without talking and not be thought rude."

"It must have been a really homelike sensation," translated Sanna, laughing with a feeling of relief at entering into the cheerful, ordinary light of day, after the shadowy tunnel of her mind.

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“Exactly. I felt almost as if in a few minutes you might be cooking my chops and getting my tea for me. But I want to talk now, very much, if you really don’t mind it. I’ll be cursing myself after I’m gone away if I don’t take advantage of my opportunities—after all our adventuring!”

He hesitated, and then went on in a tone of mingled warmth and deference that Sanna, somewhat to her surprise, found very ingratiating.

“I want very much to ask you to tell me something about yourself.”

“As to what?”

“Whatever you choose. Consider me as a man who is going to drop out of your life in a few minutes. I’d like to hear anything you care to tell.”

“Oh, there isn’t much!” replied Sanna tentatively. “My parents died several years ago. With them I was an only

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daughter; now—I live with my sister-in-law.”

“Your brother—?”

“Oh, he’s there, of course, he’s really very good to me; but I *live* with my sister-in-law.”

“And is she unkind to you?” Cartwright’s tone had a dangerous note in it. His lower lip began to protrude.

“Oh, dear, no! Don’t get that idea,” said Sanna. Her deep blue eyes looked earnestly into his; she found herself wanting to speak with unusual candor. “Rebecca is too kind in her way. You see it’s always *her* way. That’s the trouble—she never leaves me alone! I get impatient and horrid, and hate myself for it. When I’ve been trying to be my very nicest I always find out afterwards from poor Richard that I’ve been mysteriously ‘hurting Rebecca’s feelings,’ and of course that makes it very uncomfortable for him. I



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loathe the sound of the words! I never talk of my feelings to anyone; that is, I never have till this minute. Don't think of me as a Cinderella; I live in luxury."

"Couldn't you cut the concern?" asked Cartwright bluntly.

"No. This is very intimate, isn't it? You see I haven't enough of my own to live anywhere else, and besides, I'm sure that would hurt Richard, really. Only I don't seem to be the kind of a person to live successfully as an accessory."

"But of course, you won't live that way long," said Cartwright significantly, with what seemed a grudging cognizance of the situation.

Sanna flushed; with a visible accession of dignity, as she changed the subject.

"I'm sorry you are going back to South America so soon. Do you *have* to go?"

"Yes, indeed. I might have turned things differently, but as I told you, there

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was nothing to stay for, after all. I signed the contract last week; it's for three years nominally, but I'll probably not come back again now, until much longer than that. I like the life down there well enough—it's varied; I'm up in the mountains or down by the sea, I never know where the next month is to find me. Of course, it isn't as if I had anyone belonging to me. That's one thing that makes it hard to get men for the job—it's no life for a woman. What is the train stopping for? Are we here already?"

"It looks like it," said Sanna, gathering up her belongings quickly. The two other women had already disappeared in the distance. "The time seems to have come to say good-bye."

"Yes, our traveling has come to an end at last," said Cartwright sadly, as the two walked down the station platform. He put her bag in the taxicab she had called,

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and turned to her, hat in hand. "I want to tell you how glad I am to have met you. You don't know how often I'll think of the jolly time we've had together."

"Oh, I'll think of it, too," returned Sanna warmly, with a slight falling of the heart as she glanced at the vehicle that was to convey her home. She held out her hand. "Good-bye!"

He gazed at her uncertainly while he still clasped the hand. "But why, after all, may I ask, do we part so soon? If you happen not to have any engagement . . . I haven't a thing to do before an appointment at three! *Would* you do a very kind deed, and have a little luncheon with me before we really say farewell?"

"I'd love it!" cried Sanna, with a laughing flash of her lovely eyes. "I haven't anything for this morning, either."

"Now that's awfully nice of you!" He looked desperately pleased, almost touched,

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by her complaisance. "If you'll wait a moment I'll check my bag—and yours?"

"I'll send mine home in this taxi," said Sanna. "Let's walk up the avenue!"

The snow had been all carted away, the sun shone brightly, and there was something exhilarating besides the air in the unexpectedness of this freedom from the ordinary course of life, as the two strolled along the avenue together talking lightly and disconnectedly. Sanna felt the cordial but consciously transitory interest in him of a girl whose inner mind is deeply absorbed in another man—the pleasure of the moment lay in the fact that it was just for the moment; it led to no future claims.

And the luncheon carried out the promise of the road. They agreed, as it proceeded, that it was as perfect as anything of the kind could be. The little table charmingly decorated with pink

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roses was by a window, yet in the corner of the room; the waiter was a gem of his kind, deftly suggestive, benignantly protecting; the little dishes for two people who frankly allowed that they were hungry, delicious. There is a peculiar intimacy in eating thus alone together, even in the most populous place. They looked out curiously upon the gay, crowded room as from a little nook of their own, while the orchestra, just softened enough by the distance, played exclusively for them.

A gorgeously dressed woman with an enormous face and bust was at the next table, her ponderous fingers, as they rested on the *ménu*, encrusted with diamonds as far as the knuckles, with a heavy, scowling, bald-headed man as her vis-a-vis; further on a group of red-lipped girls with great white and pink hats spiked with feathers were slipping their fur coats from miraculously slim figures clad in the

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tight garb of the day; beyond, a pretty, smooth-cheeked, faultlessly attired girl in brown sat opposite a well-set-up young fellow, their heads meeting over the bill of fare with a certain consciousness in the attitude.

"What is the reason," asked Cartwright, "that you can always tell a bride and groom?"

"Do you think they *are*?"

"Oh, absolutely! Not even a residence in South America can deaden my perception so much that I can't see that! She's pretty, but I think she'd bore me," said Cartwright critically, with a glance at Sanna, and a mental reservation that she would never bore any man. "I wonder how many days out they are—about ten, I should imagine; you see he's got to counting the cost. What do you bet he wouldn't give his eyes if he could meet a man he knew?"

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"Why, Mr. Cartwright!" protested Sanna.

"Really and truly, I've saved the life and reason of—let me see—at least three bridegrooms off on a honeymoon, by giving them a chance to get out in the open with me for an hour or so; they're the most unconsciously grateful specimens you ever saw. It isn't that they don't like the confinement, you know, but even the most-in-love man has to breathe, once in awhile."

"Your sentiments may be justified, but I don't think I like them," announced Sanna sedately. "Have others, please, when I lunch with you." She started suddenly. "Why, why—that little woman over there in the corner, with a white feather boa, and a small face and pointed chin—can that be—what is her name? Mrs. Bainbury?"

Cartwright nodded—"Yes. I thought

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you'd notice her after awhile. I saw her when we entered; she looked as if she couldn't believe her senses when her eyes lit on us; she nearly started out of her seat. I suppose she thought us impostors that night, Throop says she's fool enough. She went out of the room a few minutes ago and came back again. There—did you see that? She was gazing at us now with the most peculiar expression! She seems to have finished her meal; I wonder what she's staying for?"

"Poor thing, maybe she feels embarrassed at seeing us. Perhaps she wants to come and apologize and doesn't know how," suggested Sanna, with something naïve and childlike in her tone that made Cartwright look at her with a quick, tender, protecting glance.

"Or maybe she's only waiting for her husband," she continued, as an after-thought.



## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

"Maybe she's afraid he'll be arrested by that detective out there on the sidewalk," said Cartwright; "the man with the brown derby and the round face, lounging against a tree."

"A detective! How do you know that he is one?"

"When his overcoat blew open I saw his badge. He's evidently waiting for someone. They'd have a plain-clothes man here, they don't like scandal in hotels."

"How gruesome!" exclaimed Sanna with a little shudder. "It must be dreadful to be arrested."

"Yes—I don't know! The worst is in the hurt a man often does to himself before he is arrested." He began telling her of a defaulter whom he had found down in Buenos Ayres; a good fellow apparently, with many fine qualities, yet with some fell taint that showed in spite of everything, and alienated even-

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tually all but the lowest strata of people from him.

Then they drifted off to lighter topics. He described the South American women, their beauty and luxurious way of living, the perfection of their toilettes; and gave a vivid picture of the *paseo*, at Santiago in Chile, the promenade that the señoritas take in the late afternoon, two or three girls walking abreast dressed in the height of fashion, the groups arrayed in a differing but exquisitely harmonious scheme of colors that blended prismatically together.

His gestures became unconsciously foreign as he talked. He told her, as she questioned him, of adventures that he had been in—"tight places," as he called them; one of the worst when he was lost in that terrible stony desert ninety miles long, the most arid in the world, in which there is no spear of any kind of vegetation, and where

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the only living thing and the least to be expected was the common house-fly.

He had been in several earthquakes, in which, as he frankly confessed, he was always scared; it was the kind of a thing to which you somehow didn't get accustomed. In his narrations he unconsciously showed the habitual detachment of the man who had no family ties, and was used to and expected no warmer interest in his affairs from either men or women than that which she was giving him now.

"And he is such a nice man!" she said to herself—it hadn't needed Throop's endorsement to tell her that. In his utmost impetuosity or carelessness there was a ceremoniousness about certain phases of his companionship with her that she liked; in the old-fashioned acceptance of the term, he never forgot that she was a "lady," to whom a certain fineness of life obtained, and certain observances were

## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

strictly due; it showed as much in the way he placed her seat for her, or handed her a *ménu* card, or listened when she spoke, as in the stress of the snowstorm two nights before.

And while she questioned and he talked, her chin occasionally resting on her hand as she momentarily forgot her salad, or ice, or coffee, his gaze took tally of the light in her beautiful dark-lashed eyes with their slenderly arched brows, the hair that fell on her forehead under her black plumed hat, her parted red lips, her softly glowing cheeks, the warm whiteness of her throat, and the little lapis lazuli ornament on its silver chain that lay upon the square of lace that made the top of her heather colored gown. Sanna was always delightful, but when she was silent and appreciative she had a drawing power of which she was unconscious; through that veil of mystery of which Ho-

## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

bart Cloud had spoken, one caught glimpses of a limpid clearness of soul-depths so unutterably sweet that one was ineffably touched and lured at the thought of fathoming them.

After a pause he asked at last abruptly, when the meal was about over and Sanna was putting down her coffee cup:

"Have you known Mr. Cloud a long time?"

"Oh, yes," she answered, with a very slight accession of color, not perhaps so much at the question, as at the thought that it brought with it—through all this episode she had been subconscious of Hobart every minute. "Five or six years."

"Oh!" said Cartwright, with an odd little lift to his eyebrows. "I understood last night that he was going away. Does he come back soon?"

"Before the end of the week; Thursday, probably."

## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

"The end of the week!" repeated Cartwright meditatively. He flashed a comprehending glance at her. "He'll come back then—and I'll go. Well!"

He helped her on with her coat and furs, after settling with the waiter, with a careful, tender, painstaking precision, as one would see that a child was safely wrapped against the cold; he was in no hurry to complete the welcome task and his fingers fastened even the very last button.

"Well, it seems to be over," he said, standing in front of her, and looking down at her with a smile in his friendly eyes; he had nice eyes. "Thank you for giving me this little home time"; he waved one hand at the table. "I feel almost as if you actually had cooked my chops and tea for me."

"So do I," said Sanna, laughing.

"I suppose we'll really have to say good-bye this time!"

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"Yes, I suppose so." Sanna hesitated imperceptibly. There was really no reason why she should see any more of him.

She murmured as they went through the doorway: "How very odd! Mrs. Bainbury is following. Can she have been waiting all this time for us?"

She had no answer to her question. As she stepped on the pavement at that moment with Cartwright, the detective, whom they had noticed before, came forward with an instinctively admiring glance at Sanna.

"You are both under arrest," he said quickly in a low voice, "on the complaint of this lady."

He jerked his thumb indicatively at Mrs. Bainbury, who, with her sharp little blond face pressed forward over her white boa stood now beside them with a triumphant smile. "I can get a taxi for all if you wish," he advised confidentially, "and you'd best come as quietly as possible."

## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

His glance at Cartwright seemed to imply at once a calm authority, and a menace, if it were not obeyed, of a tumult of loud whistles and hurrying policemen to enforce the law.

“The charge is burglary!”



## CHAPTER FOUR

CARTWRIGHT, somewhat to Sanna's surprise mingled with relief, made no demur. She had fancied for an instant, from the way his head reared back, and the lightning quick glance of his eye, that trouble was going to follow. Instead, however, after what seemed a moment's hesitation, he only said to her earnestly:

"This is a mistake, of course, but we had better do as the officer says," and after the cab had been called, and Mrs. Bainbury had ensconced herself therein, Sanna stepped in with meek obedience, and Cartwright followed, with the officer close behind him, letting down the small seats opposite. Sanna did not see, before the former entered, the swift sideways motion of his hand, with a rolled-up bill in it,

## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

nor the detective's shake of the head, at once sympathetic, appreciative and regretful, at Cartwright's interrogative eye. There was apparently no help for it.

There were few words spoken in the short distance traversed before the station-house was reached. Mrs. Bainbury sat up straight, enveloped in her white boa, her enormous hat making it impossible for her to lean back, tapping her foot and shaking her silver chain bag obliviously, with that exasperating, superior smile on her small features, while Sanna, beside her, glowing like a rose in her black plumage, found herself deeply, excitingly interested in the whole proceeding. Her eyes sought those of Cartwright to smile her confidence in him, and his shone reassuringly back at her for an instant before he relapsed into his attitude of tense inaction; once or twice the gloved hand lying on his knee twitched.

When the detective released Sanna's

## THE LOVERS OF SANNA

gown, which she found had been caught in the door, she thanked him sweetly, with a tone and a generous expression that seemed to say:

"I know how sorry you must be for the position you have been obliged to put us in—you wouldn't have done it if you could have helped; it must be very disagreeable to you!"

By the time the journey's end was reached some mysterious telepathic interchange of sympathy had made the detective, Cartwright and Sanna as one against a common foe. The former murmured admiringly to Cartwright as they alighted:

"Anyone can see she's a perfect lady, *she* is! What you might call a real queen," with a slighting glance over at Mrs. Bainbury, and the contemptuous addition: "That kind never knows their own mind."

A couple of policemen outside of the

## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

station-house straightened up as the small procession filed in, Sanna instinctively adopting the courteous, unobtrusive bearing of one who enters the domain of an unknown person. Her "Do I stand here? Oh, there!" showed a sweet desire to do just what she should. There were a few policemen on a bench at the end of the room, but otherwise the place was empty, save for the figure of the tall, black-mustached sergeant at the desk, as he straightened himself up with a comprehensive look at the party brought forward. He had a military aspect which Sanna rather liked. After Mrs. Bainbury's name was taken, Cartwright promptly owning to Edward Johnson for his, and Sanna, not to be behindhand in taking the cue, giving hers to the deferential sergeant, in a wild mental effort, as Mabel Clare, the case proceeded.

"This lady here, Mrs. Bainbury, is mak-

## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

ing the charge," said the detective, with an apologetic look at Sanna. "She says that these two broke into her house last Friday evening in her absence."

"Saturday," corrected Mrs. Bainbury, with a compression of her thin lips.

"And stole some silver from her dining-room. She positively identifies them as the two she found in her house after her return from town. They were let to go on their own representation that they had entered to help a sick cook, no one knowing at the time that they had taken away valuable property in a suit-case."

"The theft wasn't found out until this morning," interposed Mrs. Bainbury in a high voice. "Then, when I happened to see them in town to-day, of course, I had to take time to have them arrested, though I have an important engagement with my dressmaker before I go to Philadelphia."

"May I speak for a moment to this

## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

lady?" asked Cartwright quickly of the sergeant. "Thank you." His quietly observant demeanor had given place to a keen incisiveness; it was as if the moment for which he had been waiting had come at last.

"I want to tell you something Mrs. Bainbury, before you go on with this absurd play any longer." His manner was charged with a force that evidently had its weight with his hearers. The sergeant and the detective exchanged glances. There seemed to be a great many people, in uniform or out of it, passing the open doorways; by some occult means, apparently—for no one had left the room,—the presence of Beauty had become manifest. Everyone was trying to get a peep at the unconscious Sanna. "You're making the mistake of your life, Mrs. Bainbury; this young lady and I entered your house—I have my degree as a physician—solely in

## ***THE LOVERS OF SAYA***

response to the appeal of your maid who ran out of the door as we were passing, begging us to come in and help her with a woman in distress, whose screaming could be heard all over the neighborhood. I did what I could for her, with the kind assistance of—Miss Clare, and we remained voluntarily, and at inconvenience to ourselves, until your return, that we might acquaint you with the conditions of our entrance. Can you say this is not true?"

"Oh, true enough, I suppose," said Mrs. Bainbury with a toss of her small head, "as far as it goes! I couldn't tell what you had put in your suit-case, could I? You could carry off anything under our noses, couldn't you? But when I discovered this morning that my silver teapot was missing—an heirloom—and after looking everywhere for it—"

"Your silver teapot!" interrupted Sanna. All faces were suddenly turned

## THE LOVERS OF SANNA

toward her. Her lovely eyes glittered, her voice became charged with meaning, as she turned to the woman beside her with a motion so swift as to be almost feline. "You say you have looked everywhere for the teapot? Let me just ask you one question. Have—you—looked—for—it—in—your *pink spare-room bed?*"

"No," replied Mrs. Bainbury, visibly shrinking, but with a dawning expression common to all mothers of small children, with whom anything unusual may occur.

"Then look there," said Sanna, with withering emphasis, "and you will find it. It is where your little girl puts her make-believe dollies to sleep—she told me so! And she had the silver teapot wrapped up in a table-cover as a doll, before you came in, and took it upstairs with her when she heard you coming. Look in your pink spare-room bed!"

"Oh!" said Mrs. Bainbury, with an ac-





"HAVE YOU LOOKED FOR IT IN YOUR PINK  
SPARE-ROOM BED?"

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## THE LOVERS OF SANNA

cent of bored conviction, that turned the next instant into one of complaint. "Well, why on earth you didn't tell me this before, I can't conceive—making me lose so much time, when I have an appointment with the dressmaker before going to Philadelphia! Officer, what do I have to say when I don't want them arrested?"

"You withdraw the charge," said the exponent of the law.

"Then I withdraw the charge," stated Mrs. Bainbury. "If that cab is still there, I'll take it at once. And all I have to ask of *you* is," she turned to the two pseudo criminals,—"*please* don't come in that way to my house again for *anything*; you ought to be able to see for yourself how much trouble it makes. We can't possibly put Teresa in the bathtub every time she makes a fuss."

"The idiot! The little idiot!" said Cartwright disgustedly, as he and his com-

## THE LOVERS OF SANNA

panion started off once more together after a mild ovation in the station-house, the sergeant shaking hands in his position of congratulating authority, and the detective in his capacity, reached within the last half hour, of lifelong and affectionate friend. Cigars had passed appreciatively from Cartwright to the couple, while Sanna had beamed a lovely and gracious farewell, with an unnoticed audience hovering in the background.

“Fancy being married to a woman like that,” said Cartwright vindictively, when they were once more in the open, “I’d want to kill her!”

His tone turned the next moment to one of tenderness. “If it hadn’t been for you and your quick wit we might have been put in a very annoying position; of course, there would have been no difficulty in getting bail, but the idea of it all, for *you*—” Cartwright swallowed something. “And

## **THE LOVERS OF SAYA**

it was all my fault you know. that was the worst of it; I was ready to curse myself for getting you into such a mess."

"Oh, no! You were just fine this afternoon," exclaimed Sanna fervently; "I knew you could make it all right, I never worried an instant. Wasn't the officer nice?"

"He was very decent," admitted Cartwright.

"I've never been arrested before."

"You haven't? Well, neither have I," returned Cartwright with twinkling eyes. "That makes a real bond between us—to have been arrested together!"

"I think so, too."

They both laughed joyously. They had been footing it along briskly, shoulder to shoulder, in a growing sense of gay and intimate companionship, her soft furriness occasionally touching his sleeve as she tried to match her steps with his longer

## THE LOVERS OF SANNA

ones; the stormy wind blowing through the clear cold winter sunshine brought a fresher bloom to her cheeks. They had already neared the precincts of fashionable trade; he stopped in front of a jeweler's window, and they both stood looking in at a particularly glittering array.

"I'm going to ask you to do me a favor," he announced. "I want you to let me give you something to commemorate our complicity."

"And the Bainburys'," amended Sanna, her dark hair blowing in the wind.

"Exactly. *And* the Bainburys'. By Jove, we do have adventures, don't we!"

"But you mustn't go in here," she remonstrated in alarm, as he made a step for the doorway. "You can't buy me anything from a jeweler's, you know!"

"Now see here!" He fixed her with a highly rational gaze. "I'm not going to give you any of the usual, conventional

## THE LOVERS OF SAKKA

things that it's allowable to interest in a girl—why should I? This experience wasn't usual or conventional, was it? None of our experiences have been like they!"

"They have not."

"Well, then, have the courage of our friendship and take what I want to give you. We *are* friends, aren't we?" He paused for her answer, and then went on in an altered tone: "Of course, if you don't feel that way—"

"Oh, yes, I do!"

He reddened slightly with quick pleasure at the heartsomeness of her voice, as his eyes thanked her.

"You have such a jolly way of *always* saying the right thing! You see I'll be gone at the end of the week, and all this will be over for me—these few days are all there'll ever be of it. If a man died and left you a ring, for instance, you'd prob-

## THE LOVERS OF SANNA

ably wear it without question, wouldn't you?"

"Yes, I suppose so."

"Well!" said Cartwright triumphantly, "it's the same thing." His voice changed again. "Why do you hesitate? I only want to give you a plain ordinary ring of friendship! You'll never hear of me again; *he*—can't mind!"

"Can't he?" asked Sanna lightly, with some airy, yet proud suggestion of not stooping to quibble; his quick look humbly owned trespass before she went on. "But I never wear rings! I've never worn any but a little one that was my mother's."

"We all do things we've never done before! You'll surely wear another ring some day; begin with mine," he argued stoutly. "Don't mistake me. I don't ask you to wear it unless you want to; but if you ever do, say to yourself, 'I know that I have a friend far across the water who



## THE LOVERS OF SANNA

will never forget to wish that when I wear this ring it may bring me as much pleasure as I once gave him.' "

"Oh, if you put it *that* way!" said Sanna, smiling mistily.

"What other way is there? Let's go back quickly now and buy it before you change your mind. My appointment is at half past three, and it's nearly that now, but—be my playmate until the end of the week, won't you? 'Be matey,' as the English say."

"Until Thursday?" asked Sanna in a low voice.

"Until Thursday!" he assented. He broke into a smile. "I've been longing all day to ask you to go to the theater with me to-night! Would you?"

"No, not unless you accept my invitation to dinner first," said Sanna gayly, with a sweet, undaunted rising to the part assigned to her to play.

## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

They were some time, after all, in selecting the ring from the trays spread out before them, Cartwright showing a critical particularity that disdained the plain, characterless circlets for which she pleaded, and choosing, at last, in spite of her expostulations, a hand-wrought one of dull, heavy, twisted gold, enfolding in its curves a milky pearl, and a sapphire the color of her eyes, that satisfied him as worthy to be a pledge of friendship with her.

When she finally reached home, with the ring in its velvet box, she found a great bunch of violets from Hobart Cloud awaiting her. They were the first flowers that he had ever sent her—almost too exquisite, too sweet to be true; her heart beat uncontrollably at the message that came with them:

“To tell Sanna what I want to say to her.”

## THE LOVERS OF SANNA

As she laid her cheek passionately against their fresh, perfumed softness, the tears welling in her eyes, she thought of Cartwright gratefully as one who was making the hours fly for her toward that dear, almost too disquieting happiness that was to come.

And Cartwright as he strode off toward his appointment, his head bent down against the wind, his overcoat flapping outward, said to himself:

“Perhaps that wasn’t quite on the level when I told her that he couldn’t mind. *I’d* mind! But then I’m not a fish. If I were in love with that girl—by heaven, she’s a thoroughbred—and a darling!—I’d grudge every minute any other man spent with her.”

## CHAPTER FIVE

SANNA was dressing to go out late on Thursday afternoon to keep a last appointment with Cartwright, moving in front of the long cheval glass with swift inspection of the hang of her skirts before putting on her belt. She was always in a hurry to get off after she had once started dressing, on the chance of escaping before her sister-in-law found out that she was going; life with Bertha was one succession of irritating comments or of small clawing unnecessary demands designed to keep one from ever doing anything with the glad sweep of freedom.

On the dressing table stood a photograph of Hobart Cloud in a silver frame. He had given it to her a long time ago; it looked younger now than he, and not as

## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

he appeared to other people; for that very reason it always seemed as if in the picture, at least, he was peculiarly her own. Heaven only knows how much those silent, grave eyes had meant to a lonely girl! They seemed to follow her now as she took from the dressing table a little velvet box, and opening it, put on the ring of friendship, holding her hand out to catch the light on the jewels. Should she give Cartwright the pleasure of seeing her wear it for once? She hesitated, glanced at the picture, and then took off the ring, replacing it hastily in the box, when after a slight tap, the door opened and Bertha, as if by unerring instinct, appeared, her thin figure clad in an unbecoming negligée with faded ribbons; she might have been pretty if it hadn't been for the puckered lines on her forehead, and the droop at the corners of her mouth.

“You don't mean to say you are going

## THE LOVERS OF SANNA

out *again!* I don't see how you keep things up the way you have been doing this week—you seem to be on the go every minute! Don't you think you ought to lie down this afternoon? Don't say you're not tired, for you certainly look it!"

"I am tired then, but I'm going out just the same," said Sanna vigorously, with a glance at the mirror that was reassuring.

"Oh, well—I'm sure I only *asked*. I wish if you're going anywhere near the Snowden's, Sanna, that you'd stop in—it will only take you five minutes—and make that call you've been owing them for so long. I know you don't like to have it spoken of, but if you realized how unpleasant it makes it for me every time I meet them to have them ask why you don't come—"

"Really, Bertha, I would if I were going anywhere near there, but I'm not," said Sanna patiently.

## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

“You’re never going near there when I speak about it. If you won’t make the effort—!” Bertha’s sigh seemed to imply that she was resigned to standing unpleasantness for Sanna’s sake. “That braid on your skirt will rip suddenly—right there—if you don’t take a stitch in it; well, if it should trip you up, don’t blame me for not telling you. Mr. Cartwright isn’t coming to dinner, is he?”

“No,” answered Sanna, jabbing the pins into her hat, with a wild desire to get away before she said something that might not spoil Bertha’s afternoon, but would certainly spoil her own. After the first invitation she hadn’t invited Cartwright to the house again; the meal had been a very uncomfortable one; it was as if in the eyes of her brother and her sister-in-law she had taken a liberty. She flushed at the remembrance.

“You seem to have seen a great deal of

## THE LOVERS OF SANNA

him lately," pursued Bertha. "Richard doesn't approve of it *at all*! He had business relations once with Mr. Cartwright that were very unpleasant. And besides, there's something in Mr. Cartwright's manner to women that he dislikes *extremely*; men who live in a foreign country so long are apt to show the influence of it. Richard says that there was a lot of scandal about your friend in Montevideo, two or three years ago, with somebody's wife—a very disgraceful affair. The world is so small, isn't it?"

Sanna said nothing, as she tried to put on her veil; she had an instinctive, proud disbelief in these aspersions on her new friend.

"But I suppose that kind of thing is really in a person from the beginning. Mrs. Warner was speaking to me of him yesterday—she's known him ever since he was a boy, she calls him 'Julian'—she says



## THE MOTHER OF SANNAS

HE WAS ALWAYS WITH ME WHEN I WAS IN THE  
KITCHEN OF THE HOUSE. HE WAS ALWAYS WITH ME  
OTHER. HE NEVER WAS ONLY IN THE KITCHEN. HE  
WAS IN THE KITCHEN OF THE HOUSE. I DON'T  
SEE WHY YOU SHOULD. HE WAS ONLY THERE. HE  
WAS TO GO AROUND WITH THE KIND OF A MAN.  
Sanna—"

"I am certainly old enough to be the  
judge of my own conduct, Bertha!"

"Oh, of course, if that's the way you  
take it! What's all this about Hobart  
Cloud's sending you flowers every day?  
Is there anything new between you two?"

"No," said Sanna mendaciously, with  
the swift, defensive self-possession that the  
mention of his name always brought her.

"I only asked because when I saw him  
last night—"

"When you saw him last night?"  
queried Sanna, wheeling around suddenly.

"Didn't I mention it before? It was  
after the theater; he was coming from a

## THE LOVERS OF SANNA

train. He said he expected to see you this evening. I thought there was something different in his manner—*Sanna!* Come back, don't be in such a hurry. I have a couple of letters for you to post; you will have to buy some stamps for them at the drug store, and while you are there order some sachet powder for me, will you? The kind I always use. It will save my telephoning."

"Oh, oh, oh!" moaned Sanna under her breath. She snatched the proffered envelopes and literally ran, her very skin, as it seemed, prickling with unbearable irritation. Yet it was more than irritation—this was what she lived with; there was no love back of it to rest on, to take away the incessant sting.

And Hobart Cloud, then, was already in town, had come back late the night before, was here now. The thought stirred her strangely; she had thought of him as

## THE LOVERS OF SANNA

not arriving home until after dinner to-night, and hurrying to her at once; how absurd and childish such an idea! She might meet him somewhere now at any moment—look up suddenly into his dark, long face, feel his eyes on her. She had a pang of injury that she had not known until Bertha told her—*Bertha!*—that he was in the same town with her.

Tuesday and Wednesday, as well as Monday, had been spent almost entirely with Cartwright, as well as a couple of hours on this very Thursday morning. She had compliantly canceled all other engagements in a whole-souled desire to let him have what he wanted, as long as he wanted it so very much, and give him just as good a time as she could.

They had gone to picture galleries and to the theater and the opera, matinees as well as evenings—and had lunched and dined together; they had walked; they

## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

had even skated one morning after a trip out to View Point Mountain, on the top of which there was a small clubhouse near an evergreen-surrounded lake where the ice glittered almost blindingly in the keen sunshine; Cartwright said that a man never forgot how to skate.

And they had talked "a fearful lot," as Sanna said now pensively to herself; there seemed to be so much to talk about, the slightest happening gave a text for it, and there was almost always something to laugh at. Yet in spite of Cartwright's genuine lightsomeness she never lost her sense of the fact that if he succeeded in his career there was nobody to be vitally glad that he had succeeded; if he failed, there was no one who would feel for him in his failure. With all his real interest in life it couldn't help showing in a hundred little ways that he was a detached person, who, as he had said, only left a hotel or a

## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

tent for another hotel or tent, one group of acquaintances for another. His joy in the hominess of doing things with her touched her because it was really so little to make so much of.

And she had enjoyed it! She thought of him with a surprised, ever increasing gratitude, for making these unsettling days pass as they had. It was easy to be Cartwright's companion, it was easy to talk to him. She realized now, with a sort of wonder, that he was the only person that she knew with whom she felt all the time that she could be entirely natural.

His words: "You have such a jolly way of always saying the right thing," had been the keynote—whatever she felt like saying was always the right thing. With Bertha she had to pick and choose her words, and with Richard, though he was her brother, she had to pick and choose, not only because he was married to Bertha, but be-

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cause she could never make him understand what she meant. With everyone there was always some conventionality to observe, some disguise to wear, some prejudice to consider; with Hobart Cloud there had always been that fear of offending his fastidious taste. It was odd that his deeper attraction toward her seemed to have mysteriously revived at the moment of Cartwright's entrance on the scene.

If her waking days had been spent with her new friend, happily oblivious of all that was not on the surface, when she laid her head on the pillow it was with the thought of Hobart that she spent her wakeful nights; the half-sad, half-sweet, wistful, heart beating, confused thought of him that submerged her in emotions. She had the old, old feeling sometimes of being so tired of thinking of him, she wished that she could stop, and sleep—only sleep.

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Gayly anticipative as she usually was at the near prospect of seeing Cartwright, this afternoon as she went toward the Museum, whence he was coming up from business to meet her, she felt a tormenting, dull depression settling down upon her spirit. Bertha's disagreeable insinuations as to Cartwright's South American past,—which held some fell power of truth!—Hobart's being in town to-day without letting her know, the knowledge that this was really her last time with Cartwright, mingled with a sudden fear that all would not be pleasing for Hobart when he came to the house to-night.

A pensive smile touched her lips momentarily as she ascended the long, broad marble steps of the Museum and saw Cartwright waiting for her at the entrance; he was always punctiliously beforehand at any appointment with her. Whenever she met him after an absence of even a

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few hours his appearance struck her afresh; it wasn't only his foreignness that made him appear differently from other men, but that unexplainable effect, as much in repose as in action, of being so very much alive. She noticed to-day, however, that he had a look of care she had never seen before, though it lifted as he caught sight of her. He gave her the quick smile of pleasure with which he always greeted her.

"At last!" he said. "You promised to be here at four and it's three minutes past."

"Oh, do you count the *minutes!*"

"Certainly I do! I don't want to lose any more of them than I can help. They're all I have," he protested sturdily.

Yet after that the look of care came back again, though they went painstakingly through the first gallery, catalogue in hand, bending over to see the numbers



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on the lower pictures, and standing off to catch the right light in those that were skyed, with perfunctory praise or criticism. As they entered the next room, which the only other visitors were just leaving, Cartwright said suddenly in a tone of relief:

“Thank goodness, we are alone at last. Let’s rest on this seat here and take in the show gradually, or not at all. I don’t think I care much for pictures this afternoon, do you?”

“Not much,” she confessed.

They sat down side by side on the circular leather divan, the painted canvases in their gilt frames ranged formally, a silent audience on the walls; the cold winter light streamed solemnly down on them. There was a sense of stillness and oppressive airlessness and remoteness from the world.

“You don’t look happy this afternoon,”

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remarked Sanna, after a few moments of silence eying him critically.

“Oh, I’ve been happy since *you’ve* come—playmate!” he smiled at her delightfully. “But I’ll confess I’m tired. I gave up seeing you this morning to try and arrange some affairs that I couldn’t arrange, and it hurts me to try and pull off something and find I can’t pull it. And the shadow of all the last things is on me. Did you say I couldn’t have you for this evening? Isn’t there any chance?”

“I have an engagement with Mr. Cloud,” said Sanna, her color rising furiously, against her will.

“Yes, this is Thursday, isn’t it?” he remarked with apparent irrelevance. He looked at her, and then turned his eyes away. “Then I suppose it can’t be helped. To-morrow I’ll be horribly busy all day—even if you had any time for me!—and I have to go to a dinner with the board of

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directors in the evening, worse luck. Saturday—before I sail—I won't have a minute, probably. I may be able to stop in for a second to-morrow, but I can't count on it."

"I'll go and see you off," said Sanna comfortingly.

He shook his head. "No; it's dear of you to think of it, but I'd rather you wouldn't; the steamer is chartered by the company, and it goes from some out-of-the-way dock across the river. You'd never be able to find your way back alone, and I wouldn't want you to."

"Are you obliged to go?"

"*Absolutely!*" said Cartwright, with gentle finality.

"But you're interested in your business, aren't you?"

"Oh, tremendously."

"I'll write to you, anyway," announced Sanna, after a pause.

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He shook his head again, deliberately. "No, there's no use of your promising that. You'd try to—but after the first letter you'd find it an awful pull; you can't keep on writing to a person you never see. It's better for me not to expect it,"—he smiled at her again,—“then I won't be disappointed. Once in a while I'll send you a curio—something made out of bone, or straw or feathers—and you'll say: 'Oh, yes, that is from Julian Cartwright, a man I knew for a few days one winter before he went to South America,' and perhaps you'll get out the ring I gave you, and wear it for an hour. Have you worn it at all yet?"

"I put it on for a few minutes last night," said Sanna.

"I thought perhaps you might wear it this afternoon. Well! How do you like this place?"

He looked at her restlessly, and gave a

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wave of his hand that took in the long room, the rows of silent, heavily gilt-framed pictures on the walls, the black divans, the airless light. "It's beginning to make *me* feel as if I'd been dead for a long time."

"Then for goodness sake let's go!" cried Sanna, laughing, and jumping up. "Come!" She went swiftly ahead, he following, occasionally looking back over her shoulder at him. As he emerged from between the massive pillars of the entrance he found her poised on the edge of the broad flight of marble steps; the wind caught her skirts and blew them backward from her beautiful feet, as she stood braced against it, her head held high in the attitude of one proudly braving the blast.

Thought has unconscious association. When Cartwright had beheld Sanna in the chair by the Bainburys' fireside, with the

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baby girl in her lap, he had thought that she looked a goddess; now as she stood in this gallant attitude, against the background of the columns, he could only think involuntarily what a mother of children she would make. The suggestion came afterward with a new and nauseating force, that her children would also be the children of Hobart Cloud.

They had tea in the tea-room of the Venetia, because it was there that they had had their first luncheon; but they ate it with desultory snatches of conversation, each one preoccupied, yet conscious of the near presence of the other, Cartwright noting the familiar life of the city as one who looks upon it for future remembrance, when about to leave an existence that he realizes will go on just the same without him. They said no more about this being the last time together—it was in itself a farewell, every minute breathed it. The

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shadow of impending separation rested on them unwarrantably. Cartwright mentioned the fact after they had reached her home and were standing in the lighted hall together.

“I wanted you to enjoy this afternoon so much, but somehow it hasn’t been very gay.”

“I liked it as it was,” said Sanna, with a sweet effect of really giving herself with the words. “Won’t you come into the library and sit down?”

“No, I thank you, I think not; you’ll want to dress for dinner. I’ll just shake hands, and then—”

“Oh, wait just a moment, please!” cried Sanna hastily. Her eyes had spied a letter for her, in Hobart’s handwriting, on the hall table; she could do justice to no leave-taking with that unread. She turned slightly away from Cartwright as he stood, hat in hand, under the hall lamp, and tear-

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ing off the envelope with nervous fingers devoured the few lines within.

“DEAR SANNA:

“I am the most unfortunate man in the whole world in not being able to see you to-night; but Mrs. Kinkler, the wife of the professor, and her two daughters are depending on me, I find, for their entertainment this evening before I put them on the midnight train for Chicago.

“I shall come to you at the earliest possible moment to-morrow afternoon, if you will have me then. I seem to see you all the time, Beautiful! in a sort of far-off glow, without ever being able to reach you.

“I am sending this by special messenger.

“Always yours,

“HOBART CLOUD.”

As Sanna read, one sensation after another coursed through her veins; she felt



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furiously angry, swiftly contemptuous, stingingly hurt, and sorry—sorry for him, as one feels in protecting a child from the consequences of one's hasty anger.

"If it were our wedding day he'd be late; he'd stop to put a woman on the train!" she said to herself bitterly. A proud defiance seemed to close over her and shield her from any further thought at the moment. After all, when one had waited three or four years, what difference should a few more hours make?

She turned swiftly to Cartwright, a new glitter in her eyes as she raised her face to his.

"Well!" she said, "Mr. Cloud can't come until to-morrow. Do *you* want his evening? Would you like to take me skating in the moonlight to-night up on the mountain?" Action, action, was what she craved.

"Would I *like* it!" cried Cartwright joy-

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fully, an answering glitter in his own eyes. He took a step forward impulsively, lifted her little gloved fists to his lips and kissed them both. "Yes, I would."

## CHAPTER SIX

“**M**AY I have my dinner a few minutes ahead of time, Bertha? I’m going skating with Mr. Cartwright, and we have to take an early train.”

It was one of the peculiarities of Mrs. Corbin’s household that no one could ever get food except at the authorized times, so that, for instance, if one happened to be hungry in the morning one must fast perforce until luncheon; if so much as a piece of bread or a glass of milk were wrested from the larder between the scheduled meals, it gave subject for any amount of questioning as to why you happened to need it just then, with complaints that you hadn’t thought to mention the fact at a more convenient moment. Therefore it was not surprising that the usual thing

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occurred now, as Sanna, guiltily flushed, proffered her request.

“Why, I suppose you *can* have it, though it does upset the look of a table so to have people eating at it beforehand. The soup isn’t ready until seven, anyway; I don’t see how it can be good for anything. I don’t think you ought to go off skating if you have to hurry like this with your dinner; if you had only told me this morning, I could have seen to it properly. I suppose we might as well *all* have dinner earlier if one is to have it, though it upsets the maids so to change. Are you going with that man *again?*”

“If you mean Mr. Cartwright, I am.”

“Well, you know perfectly well what Richard thinks about him! Did I tell you that I was expecting a telegram from mamma? If papa is no better, we will go out at once to Rockridge for the night, so please be in as early as you can. I don’t

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like to ask new servants to wait up late, it upsets them so much."

"We are going to take the train down at ten-thirty," returned Sanna patiently. "I think that will bring us home in time." She faced her brother with an eager, welcoming smile as he came upstairs heavily.

"Oh, Richard, how are you?" she asked in a voice that had a sudden lovely tenderness in it, raising her lips to kiss his stolid countenance.

"How do?" he murmured inexpressively, pushing her, though not unkindly, to one side as he went on to his own room.

If the character of Bertha Corbin was as thin as paper, that of her husband was thick and muddy enough. It seemed a marvel that he could be Sanna's brother, or that his dead father and mother had been the high-souled, generous, gentleman and gentlewoman they were. He had a certain resemblance to Sanna in coloring,

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and in the arch of his eyebrows; but his chin was heavy, his eyelids were heavy, his cheeks were heavy. His manners were consistently boorish. He was absorbed in his business—in which he was none too honest—and in that other heavy business of eating and drinking. The wonder was, superficially, as to why so artificial and papery a person as Bertha should have married him; but the bond, in fact, lay in a strain of inherent coarseness in each that was in its nature immoral.

Sanna had always fondly believed that Richard's callousness covered a kind heart; he was, at any rate, Brother—some one born her very own, to whose affections she really had a right, who had the same inheritance of blood, the same traditions as herself. If she entertained him and he laughed, if she made him some little present and he thanked her, she was in spite of an undercurrent of sad, fearful, penetra-

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tion, almost childishly happy. It was a strange condition of things that Sanna, beautiful, admired, sought by many, should be always wistfully trying, with those who should have cared for her the most—Bertha, Richard, Hobart Cloud—to make her love for them do double duty and generously supplement their lack.

To-night she kept her hand on her brother's arm to say gayly: "I'm going up on the mountain to-night skating, Richard!"

"Well, what's that to me?" queried Richard, with the rudeness of the man who thinks rudeness wit. It was a favorite remark of his.

Sanna stared as if seeing him for the first time. "Why nothing, of course," she said lightly, and letting go of his arm walked away. . . . It is often in the small, unexpected moments that the significance of events, long gathering, reveals itself to us. What she did here, whether

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she were happy or sad, literally made no difference to anyone; all the little rudenesses, the little stings, would have been as nothing if there had been warmth underneath. There was no warmth. She foresaw how stricken she would feel about it later, when she sat down and felt this stab, but she put it away from her now as she had that other pang on reading Hobart's letter, with a gay, proud, willful determination to enjoy herself to-night at any cost. How glad Cartwright had been to have her with him for this unexpected evening!

There is nothing more delightful in its way than the unexpected continuance of a pleasure after one has reluctantly inured oneself perforce to the due ending of it; it gives a feeling of infinity, as if this special, uncounted-on lease of joy were lifted out of and removed from the usual conditions of life.



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The lake lay in the moonlight, a sheet of alternately bright and shadowed silver with black figures moving swiftly over it; a fringe of tall evergreens bordered its winding length as far as the eye could reach; at the near end the small clubhouse sent out its lights and an occasional flare from the log fire within. Sanna and Cartwright, hand in hand, with arms crossed, had been swinging steadily on for the best part of an hour with an easy, even motion, indescribably, satisfyingly perfect to both body and mind. She had unexpectedly found a group of people she knew at the clubhouse, young Denning among them, but after the first greetings and a couple of half-heard introductions the two had escaped from the volley of admiring looks that always greeted Sanna, from strangers as well as those she knew. In her trim skirt and short fur jacket and cap, Cartwright, with frequent covert inspection,

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thought that he had never seen her look more lovely.

"This beats everything yet," he announced at last, as they reached a far bend of the lake, hidden, in its magically beautiful loneliness and the dark evergreen-clad banks, from the other skaters. He gave the hand in his a pressure. "Don't you think so?"

"Yes, I do."

He laughed in the pleased way that somehow always touched her.

"Did you use to skate with the Bowler girls?"

"The Bowler girls!" He stopped short with surprise. "How under heaven did you ever hear of them? I haven't thought of them for years."

"Oh, I heard! I heard that you were engaged to both, one after the other."

"If there had been half a dozen more I should undoubtedly have been engaged to

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them all in succession," said Cartwright, with an infectious laugh. "Anything to prolong the pleasure of being one of the family! Confidentially, I'll let you know that it was the mother that gave the charm, though I didn't realize it then. She made it just *the* most comfortable house in which to visit that a hapless orphan boy ever lighted on—a bed at any time of the night I chose to come in, and the run of the larder—bread and jam, cookies, cold chicken, pies. Oh, I tell you Mrs. Bowler made me feel good; there was an unending welcome there for me. I was the 'Great High'; everything I did or said was right. I was about twenty, you know."

"And how did it stop?"

"Oh, I forget! The girls and I got tired of each other, I suppose; I drifted off, as boys do, ungrateful young wretches! I believe I took up athletics, and went in for training."

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"But,"—Sanna hesitated. "You have been in love?"

"Oh, yes, of course. When a man who is over thirty tells you he hasn't been in love he either lies, or he's a clam. But I can say one thing: I haven't had any experience of that sort for three years now; the last wasn't a pleasant one. I don't think of it when I can help it."

His voice dropped, and they drifted along in the silence for awhile, before he spoke again abruptly.

"I have never spoken of her to any living soul—though of course people knew about it—but somehow I think I'd like to tell you. Let's sit down on this rock and rest, you must be tired; the pine tree here will shelter us from the wind."

He bent a bough to one side, and its springiness made a back for both of them as they established themselves beneath it.

"It wasn't a pretty experience! She

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was a poor little girl who was married to a drunken brute. Yes, she was married. We lived in the same hotel, the only English-speaking people there—it was in Montevideo. She didn't really care for me, though I thought for awhile that she did. She cared for *him*—loathed and feared him, yet loved him, you know, because he was her husband, the way women do; it passes *me*! We were together a lot. I got in the habit of looking after her, and she depended on me in all sorts of ways—she was a gentle, clinging, *hurt* little creature—and there wasn't anyone else for her to turn to. What she went through with him, you couldn't help knowing; to see her face sometimes and not be able to help her . . . I lived in hell! That's not an expletive, it's literal truth."

"I know," said Sanna, in a low voice.

He looked at her darkly, the moonlight falling on his set face, as if still listening

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to the sound of the past. "Of course, if she had loved me—as I thought she did, at first—that might have settled things differently. Then—" he stopped.

"Would you have taken her away with you?" asked Sanna timidly.

"Oh, yes, I suppose so. Do you think the worse of me for that?"

"No," said Sanna after a pause, with a thrill in her voice. "Perhaps I ought, but I don't seem to. How—how did it all end?"

"One night I was going up to bed; he had come lurching in just ahead of me, and as I passed their door I heard her pitiful, terrified voice crying out: 'Gifford, don't! Gifford *dear*, don't! *Gifford!*'" and then—a scream. I hope to God I'll never feel again as I did then." Cartwright stopped short; his face was white; beads stood on his forehead. He went on after awhile in a matter-of-fact voice:

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“Well, that seemed too much! So I just broke in the door, and knocked him down—fortunately he was my size—as he stood, grinning, where he had struck her, and mashed his head in, and kicked him around the room, and trampled on him some, and several more little things like that, before I left.” He smiled at Sanna, his eyebrows going up, and his under lip protruding. “I thought I’d try and let the daylight in on him, for once. There are a few times in your life when you do the thing just as you want to do it; that was one of the times.”

“And what then?” asked Sanna, her velvet eyes with their long upraised lashes fixed on his face, as if taking tally of these new qualities in him. She glanced down at his hands, his strong hands, unconsciously clenched.

“Curiously enough, it seemed to straighten him up after that. I gave him

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warning that if he needed any more he'd get it. I should have thrashed him before—I've always cursed myself for not doing it; I was bound by all that rot about not interfering between man and wife. The strange thing was that he rather seemed to like me after that, but she—didn't. She hadn't any more use for me." His lower lip protruded again. "What do you think of that?"

"I can understand."

"I suppose women understand women—I don't! At any rate, they went away soon afterwards. I've heard that he's turned out half-way decent—they're somewhere out in New Zealand—and she has a child, so she's happy. The whole thing *rocked* me for awhile. Of course, it's been gone entirely, so far as I'm concerned, for ages; I don't think of her twice a year—heaven knows I never *want* to!—but it was bad enough while it lasted."



## THE LOVERS OF SAVA

"I like you!" said Sava in a voice that sweetly caressed.

"Do you?" He fastened his bright glance on her gratefully: his gloved hand closed warmly over hers. "Nobody else would ever say that as you did! You have such a way! I suppose we'd better go in now." He rose with evident reluctance, pulling her gently to her feet. "I mustn't let you get cold sitting here."

They started off once more with crossed hands; the keen cold air seemed to meet and embrace them as they went on with rhythmic, swaying motion. The moon was partly hidden by light clouds, but the pale aura of it remained over the silver of the ice and the darkness of the trees. Off at the other end came faintly shouts of laughter, but out here there was soul-touching solemnity, as if all the lesser things of life had disappeared.

"I never should have talked this way to

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you if we hadn't come up here," said Cartwright presently.

"Then I'm glad we came."

"So am I, indeed! It's almost like being out alone on the ocean together. There's something in the stillness and the beauty that gets at the truth in one."

"It's strange, isn't it," said Sanna dreamily, "that whenever we say good-by it seems to be only the signal for a more intimate time together."

"Whenever we say good-by or meet a Bainbury," corrected Cartwright lightly. His tone changed, though he tried to make it natural. "You see Mr. Cloud to-morrow?"

"Yes," answered Sanna, with a bound of the heart and a quick breath against which her speech stumbled. Hobart visualized before both of them, but differently.

"I want to say something," announced

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Cartwright, stopping short, and looking down at her. He spoke with a gay, tender, deliberate emphasis that held the vibration of deep feeling in it. "I want to say just this: I think you're the Sweetest Thing I've ever known. Oh, but I do! You're just golden. If I had the chance to love you, I'd love you to death!"

"Hello, hello! Miss Corbin! Hello!" A pursuing voice came nearer, proving to be that of Mr. Denning, as he ranged himself alongside with a row of several oncoming figures behind him. "We couldn't think where you and Mr. Cartwright had disappeared to. Miss Corbin, may I present Mr. Harper and Mr. Haines?—where's Bainbury gone to? I thought he was with us. He's been looking everywhere for you both."

*"Bainbury!"*

"The man whose house you entered, you know. We came up in his car. He wants

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to find out if you can tell him where Dora is."

"Dora?" questioned Sanna, wonderingly.

"Yes, his wife. The last time anybody saw her was in a coach with you two. She's always going off suddenly to some of her relatives and forgetting to let him know where she is, and they're expecting company to-morrow. It drives him crazy. He's probably waiting down at the clubhouse to head you off when you come back."

His voice dropped to a lower key of affectionate jealousy, as he ranged himself closer to Sanna, the rest of his party scattering. "I've called you up three times this week without finding you in. You're always so popular, a fellow never has a chance with you. And now, to-night—I suppose I might as well go on and leave you both." He gave her hand a lingering

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squeeze before wheeling off with his attendant shadows.

"Well?" asked Cartwright thoughtfully, as they both stood still, watching the others disappear. He pulled out his watch and glanced at it, before turning to Sanna. "We don't want any Bainbury adventures to-night, do we?"

"We do *not*."

"Our train goes in half an hour. You don't want to wait for the twelve-five?"

"Oh, no, no!" cried Sanna in alarm. "I promised to be home early."

"It's about ten now. We'll have to start back, anyway, in a few minutes. Suppose we cut across to the road from this end—I think I can strike it all right—and escape the interview?"

"That will be fine!" she responded joyously.

They made for the shore, talking and laughing, took off their skates, which Cart-

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wright put in his big overcoat pockets, climbed up on the bank, and started across the field, filled with rocks and patches of snow, which lay on the other side of the fringe of firs and pines. Below were still other fields, separated by stone walls, and far beyond them the white, winding road, with the twinkling lights of the small station crouching down by the tracks in the distance.

“It has taken us longer than I thought,” said Cartwright, consulting his watch again when they at last reached the highway, after slow and painstaking progress and much climbing of walls. “We will have to walk as quickly as we can now.”

But walk as quickly as they could the road seemed to lengthen out still further. Far ahead of them they began to descry other figures hurrying on, to disappear finally over the other side of a hill. As they reached the top of it at last they saw

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the train winding in through the valley, the headlight casting a path before it.

The two sprinted madly down, Cartwright with Sanna's arm clinched in his, holding her up lest she slip or stumble in that mad flight; the loose stones in the road flew before them, rattling down below.

They were still a couple of hundred yards from the station when the train slid almost noiselessly in. They put on a frantic speed—it seemed but a second before the waiting passengers had piled aboard, and with puffing and snorting and one mad screech it was disappearing down the moonlit vista.

"The devil!" exclaimed Cartwright furiously as they stood still in the road, gazing down the track. "I beg your pardon—but what can I say to you? This is an awful blunder on my part."

"Indeed, it's not your fault at all," proclaimed Sanna staunchly, though she felt a

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momentary wave of consternation surge over her when all hope was over. "It's dreadfully stupid of this road to run so few trains. When did you say the next one left?"

"Twelve-five. It will be nearly one o'clock when we get in town. That makes a wait of an hour and a half here." He gave a sideways look at her, full of remorse, as they entered the waiting-room.

"Oh, that's not long!" said Sanna encouragingly. "I'll go and telephone home, so that they will know when to expect me."

But she returned from the booth back of the ticket-office after some time, to say: "I can't get them to answer. But it will be all right, anyway."

"I don't believe we'd better chance going back to the lake; besides, it's quite a pull up hill after what you've been doing. Do you prefer to walk outside, or stay in here? It's not very inviting."



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"Oh, I'd love to walk, or go back to the lake, but I'm afraid I'm too tired to do anything but sit here," said Sanna regretfully, establishing herself on the narrow bench, almost like a shelf, that ran across two sides of the small room. The ticket-office was at one end, a large cylinder stove at the other; framed time-tables hung on the walls of cracked plaster with the black expanse of two windows between; it was hard to believe that only a door separated one from the moonlit hill and valley. The air in the station was warm—*too* warm. Sanna unbuttoned her fur coat and threw it back; never, Cartwright thought, had she looked so richly, glowingly beautiful. Her eyes took on a mischievous gleam as they met his suddenly:

"It is a Bainbury adventure, after all!"

"So it is," he agreed, adding fervently: "What an *extraordinary* family they must be! What are you laughing at?"

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"You always say that! Oh, dear me!" cried Sanna, falling a helpless prey to laughter.

"'I always say that!' Well, I won't say it long," remarked Cartwright meditatively.

"Don't," ordered Sanna, with a frown, that had, however, a hint of heavy-lidded sleepiness about it. What with the skating and the race down and the heat of the place after the cold air outside, she began to feel lethargic. "That's the forbidden subject to-night."

"Yes, I know," agreed her companion submissively. He regarded her as she sat gazing straight before her, her hands folded in her lap. To-morrow night she would be with Hobart Cloud—there would be no more putting that off.

It was what Sanna herself was thinking. Would it displease Hobart when she told him how she had spent these last days, this

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evening? It ought not to, she felt, with proud offense at the thought, but men were not always—reasonable. Suppose he were angry about it—but he wouldn't be! In a flash she saw him very angry—very much hurt. Then she would say . . . She saw them quarreling—parting—and turning herself, heartbroken, to Cartwright for comfort and finding him gone too.

What a strange, miserable train of thought! She tried to keep away from it; Hobart was always kind—yes, kindness itself! How singular that he should come toward her now, unexpectedly, with a hat like the iron urn on top of the stove, while a sail kept flapping in front of Cartwright's face so that she couldn't see it.

"There is almost an hour more to wait," said Cartwright's voice. "I don't mind if you don't!"

Sanna did not answer. She was gazing

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apparently straight ahead as before. Cartwright, bending forward to look in the face, saw her lids raise, revealing two deeply-blue solemnly-expressionless eyes before the lids wavered and fell shut again.

"I think—I'm sleepy," she murmured in a voice that slid away. Her hand slipped suddenly to one side as if seeking a resting place.

"Lean your head against my shoulder," said Cartwright, pressing it down gently with his hand, while she unconsciously obeyed, with a deep sigh of relief.

He put his arm around her outside of her coat to hold her up; what a dear, warm, soft bundle she was, her furry hat and her fragrant hair touching his cheek when he bent over her, her lashes curled up, her red mouth . . . To see Sanna's face in sleep was a touching surprise; it pulled unexpectedly at the heart—that bright defense which armored her against

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the world was gone, with no half-sad veil of mystery to take its place; she had a look only of helpless, childlike trustfulness, and innocence of heart. One could but long, unbearably, with a swift pang of foreboding, that life should use her well.

Once she stirred, as Cartwright watched her, ineffectively rebelling at her position, with some incoherent murmur and a momentary opening of those velvet eyes.

“Don’t bother; just put your head down again. Everybody does it, it’s perfectly usual,” he assured her, as he felt, quite rationally, with some whirling hallucination while the blood coursed through his veins, that it *was* the usual thing under the circumstances, as a man with a temperature of a hundred and five may declare that he is entirely sane. He shifted his hold of her tenderly, so that he might see her face more plainly, holding her closer

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to him, while feeling that he would not for the world take advantage of her helplessness in even the slightest way to shame her, if she knew, before that d—— fellow she cared for.

The sordid bareness of the waiting-room fostered the delusion that passion couldn't be felt within those time-table-hung, plaster-cracked walls, diversified only by the two doors and the two high, empty black windows. The fire in the stove was dying down into white ashes. The large clock opposite ticked loudly and solemnly, while the telegraph instrument in the ticket-office ticked incessantly with a light, tripping motion; the operator was not seen but occasionally his chair-legs made a scraping noise.

A man began walking up and down outside; every little while he came in and, crumpled and battered of outline, walked over to the stove, warmed himself for a

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moment, spat in the receptacle for that purpose and walked out again, with heavy footsteps, looking neither to the right nor the left as he went, while Cartwright held Sanna closer.

"Oh, I *would* love you to death," he whispered tensely, with whirling thoughts that tried to shape themselves. He took her gloved hands, crushed them in his, fondled them, raised them to his lips, with his eyes on her lovely unconscious face. Once his lips brushed her hair, lightly.

After awhile he looked at the clock with a start, as his ear caught voices in the distance. It was nearly twelve.

"Wake up, you Sweet Thing!" he whispered. "Sweet Thing—do you hear me? It's time to go; wake up!" He shook her gently, once and yet again, a delicious process that made him long to snatch her to his heart. "Sanna! *Sanna!*

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You must wake up, dear, people are coming—”

“I know,” she murmured, at his louder voice, sitting up straight though still struggling with the lethargy that claimed her, as the station became suddenly filled with loud-talking, smoking men, with jingling skates.

In the train she still dreamed, but, no longer supported by him, her head leaned against the window casing, though Cartwright felt the warmth and sweetness of her yet in his arms. As they neared the town she woke at last, completely rested and refreshed, rising indeed alertly to leave the car.

“Dear me, how stupid I have been!” she lamented. Her face reddened suddenly. “I have a sort of remembrance—or did I dream it? Were you—*holding* me when I was in the station?”

“Well, you were a terribly sleepy girl,”



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answered Cartwright evasively. "It's pretty late now, though the city is so bright it doesn't look it.

The city might be bright, but the house, when they reached it, after taking a cab, was dark; there was no light showing anywhere. Cartwright rang the bell, and waited silently while the cab waited for him; then rang again, with no result.

"This is very strange," said Sanna in a low voice. The rows of houses across the street, all equally dark, seemed to enjoin silence.

"I didn't hear the bell ring."

"No, you can't hear it out here; it sounds in the back hall. My brother and sister were partly expecting to be called out of town for the night; they may have forgotten to leave any instructions about me."

"Would they do that?"

"They wouldn't mean to, of course.

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And we have such irresponsible maids! Bertha is always changing. I suppose they are all asleep. Have you kept on ringing?"

"Yes, I'm keeping up a perfect fusillade. They'll hear after awhile."

But the two on the steps waited in vain for the welcome turn of the key in the lock. It was becoming keenly cold. Cartwright still rang at intervals and waited impassively; his figure in his big overcoat and his face with its dark mustache gave an impression of being cut out of stone, while Sanna, bent over and huddled together, strove to withstand the chill. All glamour had gone from the situation; the romance, the soft intuitions that had seemed to pulse in the bare waiting-room had given place, on his part, to the exceedingly matter-of-fact handling of a very annoying situation.

"There's no good staying here and do-

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ing this any longer," he said at last, decidedly. "Is there any friend with whom you can stay?"

"At this time of night?" asked Sanna doubtfully. "I don't know! I could go to the Sewell's at any hour, but Mrs. Sewell is very ill. We might drive around past the Clays'; they may be up."

"Very well," assented Cartwright, giving the direction to the driver as they entered the waiting cab together once more. Neither spoke on the way to the Clays', and when they reached it they both knew that the journey had been futile. The Clays were not up.

"This settles it," said Cartwright shortly. "You'll go wandering around no more. I don't see how your people ever let you get in such a hole! Not that it amounts to anything, of course," he added.

"No, of course not," agreed Sanna

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brightly, while wondering blankly what on earth she was to do.

“The Bellair is near here—a very good place not far from where I’m stopping. I think that you’d better go there for the night.”

“But will they take me in? It must be nearly two o’clock by this time.”

“Oh, they’re used to having people come at all hours.”

“Yes—but without any luggage—not even a valise? Isn’t that rather unusual?”

“Oh, we’ll make it all right,” he averred, meeting her anxious gaze staunchly, and wishing for the first time that she were not so unusually beautiful. “You’re not really bothered?”

“No—not if you say I needn’t be.”

“By the way, of course you haven’t any money with you?”

“No.”

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"Then you must take this." He handed her a twenty-dollar bill. "You must pay for your room in advance out of this when I engage it for you. You've come in by a late train. I—here we are!"

As the cab rolled up in front of the large hotel, Sanna looked at the lighted hallway and its red carpet with a moment of panic. Another cab had stopped ahead of theirs, and a tall, boyish young man with a dress-suit-case stood on the pavement, settling with the driver.

"Wait here a moment," said Cartwright rapidly to Sanna, jumping out himself and joining the youth. After a couple of minutes of earnest conversation he came back, his companion following with a bewildered expression.

"This is Mr. Clelland, Miss Corbin," he announced formally, as he helped her to alight; "Mr. Clelland of Yale. He is very glad to save you the embarrassment of any



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explanation in here by loaning you his suitcase for the night."

"Why—yes," said Mr. Clelland reluctantly, as by compulsion, with, however, a momentary gleam of admiration as his eyes rested on Sanna. "I'm very glad to be of service."

"You're very kind," said Sanna, in extreme wonderment, as escorted by the two, Cartwright in possession of the valise, they entered the hotel, *en route* for desk and clerk, the gaze of the latter instantly glued on Sanna, who beautiful and dishevelled as she was, had the unmistakable air of innocence and high breeding.

The arrangements were quickly made, and a boy called to take charge of the luggage.

"Now we shall bid you good-night," announced Cartwright. "I hope you will rest well after your long journey. Mr. Clelland," he laid his hand on the youth's

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shoulder, "goes with me; I'm to put him up for the night."

"Oh!" exclaimed Sanna. She clutched wildly at any lucid idea. "To-morrow—I'll see you to-morrow at home, shall I not?"

"Surely!" said Cartwright. His ardent glance, as if freed from a leash, seemed to leap toward her, to kiss her hands, her feet, her hair, her mouth. "I'll have to come and say my last good-bye, you know."

As the elevator carried her up she saw the two walking off and caught another glimpse of Mr. Clelland's reluctant, bewildered countenance. When she was finally inside the big hotel room, with the door locked, she sat down limply on the high mattress of the brass bedstead, her gaze fixed on the respectability-bestowing, black-initialed, tan leather suit-case, which enclosed the kidnaped youth's traveling wardrobe.

"Well, *nothing* can go beyond this," she

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murmured blankly. Not even to herself could she own that dizzying look in Cartwright's eyes.

All through that wakeful night, ceaselessly awirl with disconnected thoughts of a stupendous morrow, when Hobart, Hobart, would claim her at last, and this strong resourceful new friend would go, there were moments when her restless glance seemed to catch, as a new thing, the outline of the alien suit-case standing in the middle of the room, and she tried to bury her face in the solid, unyielding surface of the enormous pillow to stifle the sounds of her immoderate mirth.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

**S**ANNA stood once more by her glass, pinning a fresh bunch of violets at her belt, her ear strained the while, as it had been all the afternoon, to catch the sound of the telephone. She was dressed for Hobart's coming in a dark blue cloth gown made with a closely clinging skirt; the upper part of the waist was of a transparent blue material, and collarless; her white throat rose exquisitely above it.

There was an unusual languor about her; her face was very pale, but this soft pallor seemed to enhance the lovely duskiness of her hair, the pure modeling of her face, the red of her lips, and the intense blue of her eyes, under which there were dark shadows. Never had Sanna looked more fitly formed for love than at that moment,

## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

never perhaps had she felt so little capable of connected feeling of any kind.

That morning she had jumped from her bed to the 'phone in the room to take a message from Cartwright, giving her brief directions as to her departure from the hotel, where she was to leave her luggage to be called for; he wished he could come over for her, but it was impossible—every moment was full.

“Then when am I going to see you?” she had asked anxiously, and he had replied that he couldn't tell then; it would be some time in the afternoon, but he would ring her up after luncheon and let her know just when to expect him.

As she was turning away now from the dressing table on which stood Hobart's picture in its silver frame, she paused and lifted the tiny box that contained Cartwright's ring, and taking it out put it on her finger, regarding thoughtfully the dull,

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beaten twisted gold of its circumference, and the pearl and sapphire it enclosed, as if beholding it for the first time—stood irresolute, as once before, on the point of removing it, and then half smiling, left it on, even though Hobart's eyes seemed to follow her disapprovingly. Cartwright should see her wearing his gift once before he left.

Sanna on reaching home that morning had found Bertha still absent; she came back, however, about lunch time—her father having taken a turn for the better—but very tired and cross at having been unduly alarmed, and hardly listening to Sanna's brief outline of the night's adventure.

“Please don't tell me now, I'm too tired to take in *anything*. Will you ask Ellen to bring me up a cup of tea? I don't want anything else, I've such a headache; I'm going to rest. And Sanna—”

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"Yes, Bertha—"

"I wish if you're going out after luncheon you'd stop at the furniture place and ask them to send that big chair home at once—the one that was left to be covered; they don't take the slightest notice when I telephone; I was thinking of it all the way back in the car. And if you're passing the cleaner's go in and get my gloves—I've lost the ticket, but they can easily look up the number. I'll just write a couple of cards for you to mail at the corner."

"I wasn't going out, Bertha—but I suppose I can, of course," she added.

Why was it that one could never so much as speak to Bertha without being made use of in some petty way? Sanna meanly hurried off, lest commission should be added to commission. The only things in which Bertha ever showed any real interest were her unnecessary, inconceivable

## THE LETTER OF 1884

STANDS: AFTER IT HAD BEEN OF IMPORTANCE  
WEDGED INTO THE HANDS OF THE  
THIS WAS A GREAT AND MISCHANCEFUL AND  
THEN WERE DEPOSED IN THE HANDS OF A GREAT  
ACCOMPLISHED IN DEEDS.

SUPPOSE THE TELEPHONE HAD BEEN IN  
SARNA'S HANDS AND THE MESSAGE HAD  
FORGOT TO ANSWER IT—HE HAD PASSED AND  
GONE ON, AND THE MESSAGE HAD BEEN  
TEDIOUS, FRETTERING WITH AN EVERY PLACE TO  
BE TOLD ON HER RETURN THAT THERE HAD BEEN  
NO MESSAGE IN HER ABSENCE. SHE CALLED UP  
"CENTRAL" AND HAD THE INSTRUMENT TESTED,  
LEST IT SHOULD BE OUT OF ORDER; IT RANG WITH  
A LOUD SUCCESSION OF PEALS THAT COULD BE  
HEARD ALL OVER THE HOUSE. SUPPOSE CART-  
WRIGHT WERE PREVENTED FROM CALLING HER UP  
AT ALL? BUT HE HAD PROMISED TO LET HER  
KNOW, SHE WAS SURE THAT HE WOULD COME, IF  
ONLY FOR A MOMENT. SUPPOSE HE CAME  
WHILE HOBART WAS THERE? THAT WOULD BE  
DREADFUL IN EVERY WAY! THERE SEEMED TO

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be so much agitating confusion; as many times as she had pictured to herself the meeting with Hobart it had never seemed like this. The minutes passed while she waited, sitting with her hands folded in an attitude of quiet, while she was inwardly becoming more and more restless each instant. She slipped a couple of ten-dollar bills into an envelope to have in readiness to pay her debts, and still waited.

When after a long, long while, the telephone actually rang at last, she could hardly get to it fast enough.

"Yes? Who is this?" she breathed into it, and Cartwright's voice answered:

"Is this you, Sanna?"

"Yes, yes!" She did not know when he had begun to call her Sanna, but it gave her a thrill of pleasure to hear him say her name thus.

"I couldn't let you know before; I'll explain when I come. I'm going to take a

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cab now, I'll be with you almost immediately, though it can only be for a few minutes."

"Very well," said Sanna, hanging up the receiver, and almost in a panic after her first throb of joy. He was coming *now!* Why had the fates, those maddening dispensers of destiny, ordained that Cartwright should fix on the very hour when Hobart would also probably be there? To have them both together would be almost the worst that could happen; it would spoil her time with either one.

The library, within whose comfortable precincts she and Hobart had always had their long, long talks together, was in the hands of the paperers; her friends to-day must perforce be received in the drawing-room, a cheerless, heavily ornate apartment which she hated, filled in Bertha's taste with gilt armchairs and sofas and glittering, bookless tables that seemed to

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belong to a hotel; no surroundings could lend themselves less to intimate confidences. But she went to it now, perforce, taking her seat by the window and peering out anxiously from behind the curtains. She caught sight of the cab as soon as it turned into the street, and saw Cartwright leap out from it and dash up the steps, his overcoat as usual flying outward, and his soft hat pushed back on his head in the way that made him look so very different from other people.

Yet the moment her eyes rested on him as he entered the room without removing his coat, unshaven, haggard and worn, with a contracted brow and set lips, her heart sank inexplicably; she felt instantly conscious of a lack somewhere, a new constraint between them which the glittering stiffness of the room accentuated.

At the first greeting he said quickly, with a glance at the hand he held:



## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

"You have on my ring, I see—that is very good of you," but he sat afterwards in an obviously temporary attitude on the edge of the gilt chair he had dragged over toward her—and in which he looked extremely incongruous—with his eyes turned away from her most of the time as they talked, and flapping his hat idly and distractingly against the side of his chair, like a troublesome boy who knows he is not behaving as he should.

"Here is the money I owe you," said Sanna, handing him the envelope from her belt. "I've been afraid I'd forget. Thank you so very much."

He took it with a gesture that disparaged thanks. "You needn't have bothered about it. You were comfortable last night?"

"Oh, very comfortable. I think it was wonderfully good of Mr. Clelland to trust me with his belongings."

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A reminiscent smile flickered momentarily over Cartwright's set features.

"He was a nice boy," he agreed.

"And he didn't need his things?" continued Sanna, striving unnaturally to make conversation in the face of Cartwright's altered manner, and with her ear strained to catch the first sound of the bell that would herald Hobart's arrival.

Cartwright shook his head.

"No; we didn't go to bed at all; I couldn't have slept! We saw the town instead; he had the time of his young life, I assure you. I won his fervent gratitude—he loves me! We're friends for life." He paused a moment, and then went on in a different tone.

"I must tell you that I've spent most of the day in trying to get a man to go down on the steamer to-morrow in my place with the papers and things, so that I could wait over until the end of the month."

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"Oh, couldn't you?" cried Sanna eagerly.

His eyes shifted over to her face for an instant and then shifted back again; he gave another swishing flap with his hat against the gilt chair.

"No; no good! I had no end of trouble chasing up the fellow I was after—he's represented the company before—and when I did finally get him I found he'd just accepted a position somewhere else, worse luck for me! Of course then there were a lot of things to see about. I had figured to have a couple of hours with you although I hadn't told you so—almost time enough for an adventure." A fleeting reflection of his usual smile passed over his face. "But it was no use; I've had work enough to get here as it is, for a moment. There's a man waiting to see me before I go to dress for that confounded directors' dinner, and Greely will be with

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me then until after midnight. We sail with the tide to-morrow at ten."

"*Can't* I come and see you off?" pleaded Sanna in a low tone.

Cartwright shook his head again. "I'd really rather you wouldn't; as I told you before, it's a bad place to get to, and I shall be busy up to the last minute. Besides, I wouldn't want to see you waving to me when the ship pulled out—that's not my idea of a cheerful parting! I'd rather say good-by to you here, and thank you with all my heart for all the pleasant hours you've given me."

"We have had such a good time together, haven't we?" said Sanna, trying desperately to hold on to something from this dissolving companionship.

"Well, *I* have," stated Cartwright. "I'll live it all over on the voyage, and many, many times afterward."

"Oh, you'll marry some charming

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señorita when you get down there and forget all about your stay here," said Sanna with banal lightness.

"No, it's you that will be married long before I get back again," returned Cartwright significantly. "I hope you'll be very happy. I'll not be here to offer my congratulations at the proper time, so I'm giving them now, you see. I haven't forgotten that you are expecting another visitor this afternoon."

Sanna did not answer; she felt her color rise annoyingly. They stood looking at each other impersonally through this chill formality that had crept in between them, as different as possible from the joyous unconventionality of their previous acquaintance. The few days of their intimacy showed themselves now as but an interlude between the permanencies of life and feeling.

"Well!" said Cartwright, "the time is

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up, it's good-by at last, I'm afraid." He tendered his hand.

"Good-by," said Sanna, heartily responding in kind to the frank grip of comradeship. "I wish you the very best of good luck!"

"Thank you with all my heart," he replied.

She went with him familiarly down the hall, opening the front door herself to let him out, and called "Good luck!" again cheerily, as he took off his hat to her when he looked back on reaching the pavement. That last look from the eyes that met hers struck suddenly at her heart and took her breath, such a black haunting depth of pain and longing was in them.

The door closed, and he was definitely gone. The fact came over her suddenly with startling abruptness.

*Gone!* Why there were ever so many things she had to say to him before he left;

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they hadn't even talked over last night properly; it couldn't be possible that he had gone now for good—the idea was monstrous! She could think of nothing but that she had to see him again before the episode came to an end. If she might only call him back now! But he had gone too far for that. She hadn't even known the name of the vessel on which he was to sail, or his South American address, or even at what hotel he was stopping to-night. Everything else seemed brushed from her mind but that one monstrous fact that had no feeling about it but its urgency that she simply *had* to see him again to ask these things before he really went—and oh, to ask why he had looked at her with those desperate, haunting eyes the very, very last thing!

She snatched up a motor coat and hat from the hall with a wild idea that if she walked very quickly she might overtake

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him, and then dropped them helplessly. A childish anger began to mingle with the desire of finding him. "He had no business to leave me suddenly like this," she kept saying over and over to herself as she ran up the stairs to her room, "and I'll just tell him so!" But she could never tell him.

The red sun, setting in the cold winter sky, made her strangely hark back in memory to last Sunday afternoon when she didn't go to walk with him and see the sunset on the snow. This Sunday he would be on the ocean . . . It was the strangest, the most impossible thing to face the fact that he had dropped out of her life forever; these last few days had been so filled with him, that it was like walking along a brilliantly lighted platform and suddenly stepping off with a crash into darkness far below. It just *couldn't* come to an end this way!



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“Mr. Cloud is in the drawing-room, Miss Sanna.”

Sanna jumped up; the present rushed over her; her heart began to beat more and more violently as she glided down the stairs once more into the room where her lover awaited her.

His back was toward her when she entered, as he stood, a tall masculine figure, gazing out of the window, but at the sound of her light footstep he turned and came forward eagerly to meet her, with a light in his dark eyes and that lovely, irradiating, heart-warming smile that was so peculiarly his own. He always dressed well, with a careless precision; he wore now, as she noted instantly, an unusually well-fitting coat, a handsome pin in his lavender scarf, and a gardenia in his buttonhole. The gilded room, which had made such incongruous background for Cartwright's rough untidiness, only ap-

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peared to set Hobart off as something infinitely finer. He looked very distinguished, a man to be proud of and defer to, yet somehow more settled, heavier, older, strangely different from the way in which she was accustomed to picture him to herself.

She wondered, with a shock, if she had always, always been trying to make him something other than he was? As he took her hand she felt at one and the same moment that she was very, very fond of him and that the fact seemed to be of no importance.

"At last!" he said, with a catch in his voice, while his eyes ardently, possessively approved her. "I can never begin to tell you how much I've longed for this minute, Sanna!"

"How are Mrs. Kinkler and the Miss Kinklers?" she asked defensively, an elfish smile lighting up her eyes, and her

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white teeth showing between her parted lips.

He made a rueful, deprecative gesture as he seated himself beside her on the sofa.

“Don’t talk of the Kinklers! I’ve had enough of them these few days to last me all my life.”

“Yes, and Mrs. Kinkler will go around telling everyone how devoted you were to them.”

“There’s only one person in the world to whom I’m devoted,” said Hobart, putting the gibe aside with a thrill of deep feeling in his voice, and a gaze that dwelt on her as if more and more fascinated. He leaned toward her. “Why is it, Sanna, that you are so much more beautiful than you ever used to be? I wonder if it can be my violets that are making you so strangely lovely to-day?”

“They are very lovely violets,” murmured Sanna, drawing back from him

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slightly. She put up her hand in some new embarrassment to touch them, and the next instant saw his arrested gaze fixed on it curiously.

"I've never seen you wearing a ring before. Where did you get this very singular specimen?" he questioned. "It looks as if it had a meaning."

"It has!" returned Sanna with spirit. Her voice softened. "It's a ring of friendship." Why should she make any concealment to Hobart? She looked at him starrily. "It was given me by Mr. Cartwright."

"The foreign gentleman?" asked Hobart, with a chill in his tone.

"He's not foreign, he's an American," corrected Sanna with unexplained resentment.

"The foreign-American gentleman then," said Hobart, with that quiet, formal insistence which she knew always cov-

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ered the fact that he disliked the subject under discussion. "And why a ring of friendship from the foreign-American gentleman, may I ask?—That is, of course, if there is no secret about it."

"There is certainly no secret—it is simply because we have grown to be friends!" said Sanna hotly.

"'Grown to be friends!' Since Sunday, do you mean?"

"Exactly: since Sunday. We have done a lot of things together this week," continued Sanna with impulsive candor. "He leaves to-morrow for good, you see, and he was grateful—he needn't have been!—for companionship."

"I comprehend," said Hobart, with dangerous smoothness. "Hence the ring of friendship—a charming testimonial. And have you found the society of this foreign—"

"His name is Cartwright."

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"Precisely. Have you found the society of this foreign-American-gentleman-whose-name-is-Cartwright, attractive?"

"You begin to sound like the House that Jack Built!" said Sanna furiously, and flushing immediately after with the sense of being ill-bred in Hobart's eyes. She controlled herself with an effort.

"Mr. Cartwright has been extremely kind; I like him very much. If you would care to hear of our adventures—some of them were really very amusing."

Hobart made a gesture of protest.

"Unless you'd rather talk about yourself!"

"Yes, I would much rather talk about myself—and you," he announced deliberately. "Nothing else, I may as well confess, interests me just now. I want you to tell me—" his voice softened, he leaned over her, touching her hair lightly with his long fingers in the familiar

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caress that had always hitherto thrilled her—why didn't it now?—as he bent to look into her eyes. "I've had you before me every hour this week, Sanna, but when I see you, you're so much more exquisite than I dreamed—" he stopped as if lost in that gaze; something in it made her draw back once more. He saw the movement, but only bent over her the closer, with swimming eyes.

"You're almost too beautiful!" he murmured.

The insistence on the one theme jarred on her suddenly; with it came a sudden, surprised realization that Cartwright was the one man she knew who had never praised her beauty. She had a quick, grateful conviction that she wouldn't have to be at her best to have him like her. She wanted to ask now: "Is my appearance the only thing that makes me worth your caring, Hobart?" But the sense of his

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personality began to oppress her as usual; Hobart would hate to be caught up like that. She struggled against the feeling that she must strive, at no matter what cost to herself, to please him, but she had been subject to it too long; it held her, even though she resented it with a new antagonism. Why must she be always self-conscious in his presence, why could she never speak to him for more than a few minutes, frankly, without taking thought—as she did to Cartwright? The prospect of having to be careful for all the rest of her days oppressed her anew, unbearably; how could she ever be happy if she felt that she was offending his taste in any way?

“Sanna!” said Hobart. His face had paled, he looked at her as she sat there in her blue gown with uplifted head and clasped hands, with an intensity before which her eyes dropped; a deep agitation



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came over her, mingled with a strange, intolerable restlessness, a growing revolt against hearing any more. This was what she had longed for, oh, so much, in days gone by, but the time for it had gone; it gave her sudden anguish to realize it. The whole scene seemed unreal, theatrical, pitifully beside the mark; nothing was real but some great looming fact in the background of her mind, of stupendous, absorbing importance, that was clamoring louder and louder for her whole consideration.

“No—don’t, Hobart!” she whispered.

“Don’t—what? Beautiful!”

“Don’t say it.”

“But I’m going to say it! Not tell you that I love you? You ask too much!” returned Hobart with decision. He put his arm around her as he went on with a gentle forcefulness. “I had a dream the other night about you, Sanna. I dreamed that I stood on the shore and saw a boat coming

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toward me with a woman standing on the deck in the moonlight, dressed in white, with a wreath of flowers on her head. As she came nearer I saw that it was you. When the boat landed you came straight toward me, but when I opened my arms for you, you vanished. I've been longing for you unbearably ever since."

"In spite of the Kinklers?" asked Sanna, with an ungovernable, elfish breaking-through of all bonds.

He reddened, and drew back. "This is no joke to me Sanna," he said, with wounded stiffness.

"Oh, Hobart, Hobart, forgive me," cried Sanna penitently, with an unexpected rush of love and pity for him.

He poured forth words that she only half heard. He seemed as inexplicably far away as if they lived at opposite poles. She saw him unexpectedly by some clear sight, as a man who had never known how

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to claim his own, who would go through life, letting what he really wanted the most slip away from him, partly from a strange inertia, partly from a perverse self-consciousness that made him dislike to let the world see what his feelings were; she divined that he had always cared for her as it were tentatively, with a smothering of any feeling that threatened to overpower him. Something in Cartwright's attitude had mysteriously fired a spark that flamed beyond his habitual control; would he regret it afterward?

As she looked at him now while he was speaking, she saw him, with this new vision, always giving place reluctantly from force of habit to the flame of love, grudging when it overcame and controlled him; his wife must humbly strive to keep the fire burning, while subservient to his mood. His courtesy, his perception, his consideration, his apparent selflessness, covered an

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ego that could swell to giant size in an unexpected moment, so that any lightest wandering air of differing thought must inevitably find him out and chill him.

Like one in a dream, she heard him telling her in that deep persuasive voice of his how much he was her lover. He was claiming her, with conventional deference, it is true, yet with an ardent possession already assured, which she once would have given her life to hear! It passed her by without touching her consciousness. His face, strange, almost repellent to her in its unwonted passion, left her stone, his arms around her were no more than the arms of the chair she sat in; he seemed strangely deficient in any physical magnetism for her. Would it have been like this even in the years gone by? Was it her idea of him that she had really loved, and not Hobart himself? She wondered desperately if this were only

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some unnatural phase in her—if she would wake to find herself as before, and that she had put away from her all that made life precious.

But when he bent to kiss her, as his lips approached hers some swift instinct arose; she put up her hand defensively as she cried out:

“No, no, you mustn’t do that!”

“And why not, Beautiful?” he protested in his vibrant voice, smiling down ardently into the troubled blue of her eyes.

“Because—oh, Hobart! I don’t like it; I don’t love you!” She went on desperately to his evidently unbelieving silence: “Oh, I thought I did—you know that! Yes, I thought I cared, until just now; I thought I cared—a great deal; but—I seem to have—changed; I don’t know why!”

Her voice faltered, she looked at him imploringly to understand and help her;

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his gaze, riveted on her face, was reveling in the intoxication of her beauty as if he scarcely heard her. His lips approached hers once more and again she put up her hand defensively.

The room had been fading fast into the dusk, illuminated only by the lights from the street, glimmering faintly like pin points from behind the lace curtains. The cold of a winter evening when the sun has set penetrated into the stiff, glittering, formal room, uncheered by any open fire, but now the maid came in to turn on the electric lights; the two sat perforce in silence until she had left the room. Everything in the world seemed to be altering; Sanna shivered and drew further away from Hobart; if he would only go, and leave her to think of that strange, urgent, looming fact that was the only thing that really mattered!

“Hobart, *don't* you understand?” she

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pleaded. "I cannot be as you say you wish me to be."

"If you cared once, you will again," returned Hobart confidently.

"No, no. Never!" The conviction came unalterably with the words. There was a ring in them that carried its message even to Hobart's unwilling ears.

"Why do you talk like that?" he asked roughly, with quick anger. They faced each other suddenly as antagonists. His lips whitened. "What man has taken you from me, Sanna? Is it that lowbred foreign cad with whom you've been seen at all sorts of places this week? Don't think I haven't heard! You're too noticeable ever to go unremarked. Upon my word, I wouldn't have believed it of you, Sanna!" His fury flamed forth unexpectedly. "Johnson saw you going into a hotel with him and another man, at two o'clock last night—"

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"I stayed there alone," interpolated Sanna in a low voice, looking at him with strangely narrowed eyes.

He made a gesture of fierce impatience as his voice rose still higher; he strove in vain to control it.

"Alone, alone, alone! What does that matter? Where had you been—before? I don't suspect you of anything discreditable, of course, that goes without saying, or I wouldn't be here to-day; but you should never have been placed in such a doubtful position!—he should be horse-whipped for putting you in it! It makes your friends ashamed for you."

"No friend of mine need ever feel called upon to be ashamed for me," said Sanna proudly.

Her head was thrown back, her strangely narrowed eyes flamed in their blue depths, her red lips curled: could this be Hobart? "No matter how much I had thought I



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cared, those words would have killed my feeling for you."

"Not if you loved me," said Hobart stubbornly. She saw his eyes grow dim once more as he came nearer.

"No!" she ordered peremptorily, and he drew back with proud deference, yet this time with a suggestion of something remote and forlorn in his helpless yearning for her. Something in the drooping attitude of his tall figure, in the abasement of his pride, pulled at her strangely. She felt suddenly overcome with a very anguish of pity for him, a rush of that love that had been part of her very being. How could she, of all people, hurt Hobart like this, she whose one aim in life had been to please him?

"Oh, Hobart," she moaned, the tears welling to her eyes, "I'd like to love you again, I would indeed, but I don't; I can't! I thought I loved you all these years—I

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confess it to you, dear—yes, I did! I longed for you to say just what you have said now—I thought this very afternoon, before you came, that I was going to be so very happy, and instead, everything is wretched and terrible; I don't know what has come over me. Hobart, you will have to believe me! I know that it is all at an end."

"If that is the case," said Hobart stiffly, "there is nothing more to be said." A white mask seemed to have been drawn over his face. He stooped down, picked up the handkerchief she had dropped, and returned it to her courteously. "If you will excuse me, I think I had better take my departure."

"But Hobart!" cried poor Sanna. "I can't bear to have you leave me like this. I—oh, it's dreadful to me to wound you—say that you know I wouldn't if I could help it. Oh, it hurts me too, more than I

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can tell you! Say that you forgive me! Ah, Hobart!"

She seized his hands impulsively, while she looked up into his face. As he clasped them passionately and pulled her toward him, the ring on her finger scratched him; he glanced down at it and his face reddened as if she had astonishingly struck him, and then turned ashy white as from the force of that blow. He let her hands drop with a formal gesture of relinquishment.

In another moment Sanna was alone. She was free at last to face that stupendous fact that had been grimly waiting all through this unhappy, irrelevant interview to take its full possession of her—the fact that Cartwright had gone.

Yet out of this thought grew that other, but a dim, unwarranted impulse at first, yet becoming stronger and stronger during the evening when,

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as she sat alone in the house, she hoped against hope for some further word from him: he should not leave her forever with that haunting look of his for her last remembrance of him. It called to depths in her unknown before; for her own need she could have withstood it, as a woman must, but for *his*—! She didn't know what she meant to say or do when she saw him—that was the least part of it—but see her friend she would in the morning, before he sailed with the tide.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

“**R**ICHARD, do you know what ship Mr. Cartwright sails on to-day? He told me it wasn't advertised in the papers, it's chartered by the company.”

Sanna sat at the early breakfast table, dressed for the street; she looked dazzlingly fresh and radiant from her morning bath. She usually breakfasted alone with Richard, and though he read the paper most of the time it was an hour that meant a great deal to her; she could perform small services for him without being commented on, for a little while he was hers; no late hours the night before could make her forego the morning's pleasure. To-day, however, Bertha presided behind the coffee urn; she looked at her husband now as Sanna spoke, with a smile peculiarly irritating in its

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knowingness; it seemed to say: "What did I tell you?"

"No, I don't know and I don't care," he replied shortly. Sanna glanced at him; for some reason or other he was evidently not in a good humor.

"But I care!" she persisted brightly. "What is the name of the company he is with? You must be able to tell me that, surely!"

"Yes, I ought to be able to tell you that," he admitted grudgingly, with an angry flush overspreading his heavy features. "It's the Nichols-Electrographic. It's a rotten company just fit for bounders like Julian Cartwright; it did me a rotten turn once, but I'll get even with 'em yet!" He brought his fist down on the table with a force that set the china rattling, and subsided with low muttering behind his paper.

"And where are their offices?" asked Sanna, adding however, the moment after,

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"Of course I ~~can~~ find this out in the telephone book."

"I should think Mr. Cartwright would have informed you if he had wanted you to know," interpolated Bertha languidly. "I'm sure you were together enough—rather too much, I imagine!" She laughed, and Sanna grew hot. "Push your plate a little further on the table, will you? And lift up your chair a moment, it's caught in the rug. You are always so restless! You never seem to eat your eggs after you've ordered them, it's hardly worth while having them boiled."

"I eat all I want of them," said Sanna impatiently.

If Bertha had not been there Richard would have been more pliable; he might have realized what she wanted, and helped her to it with rough jesting, yet kindly; lacking as he was in graces of mind or soul, she believed that he felt the tie of being

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kin. She had a deep craving at the moment to have him one with her now, yet even since the day before some mysterious deterioration seemed to have set in that separated him from her. A wife of ordinary, clean, matter-of-fact honesty would have brought out whatever heavily decent qualities he had, as companionship with a woman like Bertha, essentially corrupt, was inevitably disintegrating them.

Sanna, as she hurried away from the table, was conscious of some strange, jesting allusion from him, as he looked up from his paper, to herself and Cartwright; she did not realize for the moment that he could be speaking to her, her bewildered consciousness caught the vulgar meaning of his words but dimly—yet unbelievably caught it; they *couldn't* mean what her revolted consciousness told her they must. She saw Bertha's conventionally prim air, as she appeared to remonstrate: "Rich-



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ard, you shouldn't speak so to your sister," while evidently enjoying the thrust at Sanna.

Sanna puzzled over the incident painfully as she went out. If Richard had really said what he had seemed to say, then she stood alone in the world. What strange touchstone had been given her lately that she saw things with such fatal clearness? Something in Cartwright's passionate directness had raised a corresponding quality in herself.

But she had little time for such analysis now. The address of the Nichols-Electrographic Company was not hard to find. The car at the corner would carry her down town past its offices more quickly than a taxicab, which would have to obey the rules of traffic. Then perhaps it might take twenty minutes more to cross the bridge to the other side of the river and reach the ship. It would only be nine

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o'clock—he would not even be on board! Then she would wait for him. She could see his look of wonder, incredulity, and then his delighted smile as his eyes rested on her. No glimmer of doubt as to the wisdom of her errand took away from its sincerity—she had made up her mind what to do just as Cartwright himself might have done.

The car, in the morning rush to business, was crowded with men who stared at her, but Sanna saw no one. Her only fear was that the conductor might forget to let her out at the right corner, but he remembered. She alighted, walked briskly down the street to a narrow building in the center of the block, the lower floors of which contained the offices of the Nichols-Electrographic Company. As she entered she saw on the first ground-glass door that she approached a large lettered card, and read the words:





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Sanna hurried down the hall, trying several glass doors with black lettering on their ground-glass panes, until she came to one where the handle turned, and she entered a small room filled with desks, at one of which stood a small, elderly man dressed in a worn, gray suit; he had gray hair and eyebrows, and a pale, lined, grayish skin. He had a pencil behind one grayish ear, and a pen in his hand, with which he seemed to be figuring laboriously over a mass of papers.

"I beg your pardon," said Sanna quickly, as he looked up. "I've come to ask you about a ship that is going to Buenos Ayres for your company this morning. I want to find out her name and where she sails from."

The little gray clerk stared at her blinking. "You will have to apply to the information desk," he announced with formal politeness.

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“But there isn’t any information desk!” cried Sanna impatiently. “You are the only person here. You must know something about the ship! You *must*.”

Her voice died away, she looked at him imploringly. “While I’m in here, the time is going.” She flung out her hands in despair.

The clerk shook his head. “It is not in my department,” he replied shortly, his eyes reverting as by magnetism to the papers before him; the fingers that held the pen twitched. “Nobody in this place understands the importance of my work but myself. Young lady, I have come here every morning for thirty-five years at sixty so as to be able to get the greater part of my figuring done without interruption; I work on holidays that I may do so without interruption and yet, you see—!” He smiled bitterly, but to a closing door. Sanna was racing down the hall out of this

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dead-and-alive place to the open air; the gray, rat-like clerk affected her painfully, he seemed to be burrowing and burrowing ineffectually through life—as she might do!—to find only a grave at the end. Who would have believed that she could be thus balked and retarded in so simple a quest? She reached the street and stood still watching the crowd hurrying past, for the moment frustrated.

For the first time since she had made up her mind the night before, the appalling power of circumstance presented itself to her; the fact that the minutes were passing so fast terrified her. All this frantic, increasing desire to find Cartwright provided her with no means of doing so. “But I will!” she whispered to herself, defiantly.

It was absurd, it was incredible that she should be thus foolishly held back. But where inquire next?

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The sight of a policeman at the further corner offered a possible solution.

"Oh!" she gasped as she reached him by the curb. "No, I don't want to cross. I want to find a ship that's sailing from across the river for South America—it's chartered by the Nichols-Electrographic Company and their office here is closed. It sails at ten! Where, where can I find out about it?"

Policemen seem perhaps above other men, to have a gallant pleasure in assisting beauty—possibly because they have to help so many unlovely people. This one now smiled comfortingly under his black mustache as he said:

"Go to the regular South American line; they'll be more likely than anyone else to know who's taking their trade. I'll put you on this car that's coming; it takes you past their door."

"Oh, thank you, thank you," warbled

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Sanna, propelled competently by a large and kindly hand into the car. It seemed a week since she had got up this morning, years since she had seen Cartwright—as it might be years before she should see him again. She felt for his ring on her finger, under her glove, and held it as if it were a talisman. He had wished that when she wore it it would bring her as much pleasure as she had given him. Oh, so vain, so futile all talismans, all signs and omens! If she could only hurry, hurry, hurry!

When she entered the large office of the South American Steamship Line her color had fled; she was very pale, her lips very red, her eyes very darkly blue. She made her inquiry at a low, broad, open counter filled with steamship folders, under an enormously high window where two swarthy young men and a blond German tried earnestly with much consultation, but unavailingly, to give her the required



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information, while Sanna turned with agonized expectancy from one to another; they seemed to know of every ship that had ever sailed or was sailing but the one that was leaving this morning from across the river and there might even be a reasonable doubt as to whether there could be such a ship! They telephoned to different places for her, ineffectually, and Sanna sat in agony and watched the clock.

At last someone—she remembered afterward that it was a thin boy with dancing blue eyes and a sputtering tongue—who had been hovering in the background, suggested that a firm by the name of Roundel Brothers, a couple of blocks over, were one with the Nichols-Electrographic—his brother worked there—they would know about the ship.

Sanna set off again, flying this time down the narrow side street, its pavement crowded with boxes and bales, after re-

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fusing all further efforts in the way of telephoning; she had begun to have a gasping fear of still being futilely within that high-windowed, low-countered room when Cartwright's ship sailed with the tide.

Her precipitate entrance into the warehouse of Roundel Brothers—filled with gleaming steel appliances of strange, involved shapes hung high up on the walls as well as standing on the floor—was, however, crowned with success.

After a moment's hesitation on the part of the first man she spoke to, who came forward from a group, by some instinct she mentioned Cartwright's name as the person she wanted to see, and the information was at once given her. She confusedly divined that the vessel was an affair withheld from the public, but her name was the *Isabel Pierce*, and she sailed from Bank's wharf.

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"And how do I get there?" asked Sanna.

Her informant shook his head, with a half smile.

"That's hard to tell you! It's difficult enough to find it even when you think you know the way. Still—I can write down the directions for you, but—" he looked at the clock and made a deprecating gesture. "I'm afraid you'll never reach there in time, Madam, it's nine thirty-five now and she sails at ten."

"Oh!" moaned Sanna, suddenly spent; her lips turned white, her eyes gazed up at him in anguish. "I suppose it's no use after all. I suppose I can never make it!"

"Now, it's just possible that she won't start promptly at ten, Clinton," said a black-bearded man, hurriedly detaching himself from the group and coming interestedly forward. "They had a lot more freight to take on, Thompson said, when

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he came back. If this lady only knew the way. . . . Have you got your machine outside, Bainbury?"

"Bainbury!" exclaimed Sanna, turning suddenly to recognize a tall, dark cavernous-eyed man, with a vacuous yet propitiatory smile, hovering near her. A wave of delight came over her—it was almost like seeing Cartwright himself to see someone who had been associated with them both. She clutched at any straw. "Oh, Mr. Bainbury, *can't* you help me?"

"I'll be only too glad, Miss Corbin," said Mr. Bainbury, coming forward with the promptness of a gentleman, his vacuity transformed into joyful eagerness. "I was just waiting to offer you my car. I'll go with you and find the trail, if you'll let me—my man hasn't any sense. Clinton, give me that card with the directions. Come on, Miss Corbin! We'll put on speed and get to that ship in time if we die in the attempt!"

## CHAPTER NINE

**N**EVER as long as she lived, Sanna knew, could she forget that ride, a thing of swift progression and heart-stopping, maddening waits in the midst of the tall buildings that loomed up above, and a maze of cable cars and cabs and wagons and processions of enormous, heavily-laden trucks. They passed through streets where there was no traffic, only men, men everywhere with a sprinkling of women filling not only the pavement but the center of the street itself, all forging on to the day's work.

They came to the bridge, its towers stretching up into the calm pale blue of a winter's morning, with bedlam circling around its base, its high space swinging out over the black, ice-choked water be-

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low, through which the ferryboats grated their way. It was a slow progress over the bridge for the machine in which Sanna sat leaning tensely forward after the manner of women, as if her body could propel the car faster in spite of all the rules of the road. Her heart that had upheld her in all discouragements began to sink more and more unbearably with this last strain. She saw herself continuously reaching the wharf whence the ship sailed, to find only a strip of dark, ice-filled water where it had been.

Mr. Bainbury occasionally offered incoherent encouragement, and whenever she looked up she met his eyes smiling at her, with rigid cheerfulness.

At last across the bridge they plunged into strange streets, that either broad or narrow, crowded or empty, seemed equally of a barren, sordid ugliness; then down through tortuous, endless, grimy ways to

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a wharf—but not the one for which they were seeking—where a battered ship lay at its slip, with trundling loads of yellow bananas passing by them to the weighers' scales, to yet another wrong wharf, empty and forlorn—losing time every minute—until at last they thundered towards the freight-laden length of a dock at the end of which a small, short, high-bulwarked steamship reared its paintless, rusty bulk between the buildings that hemmed it in on either side—the *Isabel Pierce* at last!—with strange shoutings around her, and the multiple activity of men struggling with barrels and cases to be rolled in, or hoisted up and thrown down heavily with jarring thuds somewhere between decks. There was no gang-plank, but broadside to the vessel hung a long sideways-slanting flight of wet and greasy steps, with a rope for a hand rail.

“What’s the name of the man you want

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to see—Cartwright?” asked Mr. Bainbury. He hailed an officer on the deck above; Sanna was only vaguely conscious of what explanation he was giving. The next moment he turned to her to say:

“We’re in luck! The ship won’t sail for fifteen minutes yet, and they’ll let you on board.” He held the door of the car open for her. “I’ve got to go, but I’ll send the car back for you.”

“Oh, no, no, you mustn’t do that! I’ll get back all right by myself. I’ll have all day to do it.” She felt that she wouldn’t want to see anyone after the ship left; she would want to feel free to wander as she pleased. She clasped his outstretched hand. “Oh, you’ve been so kind—I can never say half of what I mean.”

Mr. Bainbury beamed on her. “Is that so? I often feel that way myself; can’t say what I mean, you know. My wife does it. She came back yesterday, as I



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told you. She forgot to post the letter telling me where she was. After your kindness about the cook and the teapot—I feel—we both feel—but I won't keep you here talkin' to me. I'll send the car back to you."

The next instant Sanna found herself clinging to the rope as she ascended the slanting, greasy ladder. At the top a couple of brawny outstretched hands grasped hers and hauled her safely up and over onto a deck swimming in the water with which it had been lately sluiced. Somebody announced the fact that Mr. Cartwright was in his stateroom. Somebody else directed her to it—it opened out on the deck on which she stood. She picked her way on tiptoe over the wet boards past a rusty funnel, her skirt held tight around her, and came suddenly in full view of Cartwright's familiar figure through the open door of his stateroom, as

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he stood, with his hat on, bending over a partly unpacked valise.

She stood and watched his intent, hardened face for a minute, with an unexpected, chilling sensation of remoteness from him. This was a man whom she did not know, a creature entirely given over to the business world in which he rightfully belonged, with all hampering, temporary emotions swept efficiently out of the way. While she had agonized over him he had simply gone to work as usual.

But as Sanna gazed, he looked up. Their eyes met; her heart lightened exquisitely, and then, as his eyes shifted from her, sank with a new and painful foreboding.

"Well, this is a surprise," he said, with a smile that died instantly. "How in the world did you ever get here?"

"Oh, I've been all the morning trying to find it—it's been a dreadful time! Mr.

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Bainbury, of all people, brought me here at last."

"That was very kind of him," said Cartwright formally. "Sit down!" He swept the things mechanically from a seat to make a place for her which she did not take. "You find me very busy."

"Then I'll go!" announced Sanna. She strove tremulously at an attempt at lightness. "I thought you'd be glad to see me again, and is this all you have to say to me?"

"No," said Cartwright with sudden savageness, "it isn't!" He pushed the door of the stateroom partly shut—so that the deck rail, the line of the sky and the buildings that bordered the pier vanished—and stood up straight in front of her, with glittering eyes.

"This is too much! I don't know what in heaven's name brought you here, Sanna, but as long as you've come—God knows

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I don't want to say anything to hurt you, but you make it too hard for me! You seem to forget that a man's a *man*! I told you yesterday afternoon that I hoped you'd be happy soon, married to that—" He controlled himself momentarily by a violent effort. "Why, the mere idea of it is driving me crazy by the minute!" His face reddened darkly, the veins stood out on his forehead, his lower lip protruded with grim suggestion, his fiery eyes looked past her to something beyond, his breath came short, the hand that rested against the wall shook. From outside came the dimly-hoarse shouts of the stevedores and the thud of the oncoming freight, mingled with the rush of escaping steam.

"To go off this way, and think of you—with *him*—it's horrible! Ever since last night—" His tormented gaze plunged into hers as if piteously seeking relief. "It's a thousand times worse than any-

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thing I've ever gone through before. I can't *stand* the thought of you marrying anyone but me!"

"No, no, don't stand it!" said Sanna hurriedly in a low, broken voice, the tears rushing to her eyes; she reached up her arms blindly as his closed around her; she felt his hot, wet eyes against her cheek; they clung together in some strange, shattered, shuddering way as if they had been snatched from the brink of an awful calamity of which the thought held unbearable pain. . . . Neither ever remembered afterward what was said in those incoherent words in which the heart spoke.

After a while he whispered:

"That other man?"

"He's gone—forever," she whispered back with an unexpected, poignant stab at the heart that seemed almost to bring about the dissolution of soul and body, at the loss of that dear, sad dream of youth—

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the last pang that the thought of Hobart Cloud was ever to give her.

“Ah,” he groaned, “why didn’t I begin trying to settle things differently as soon as we met? I knew from the first that I loved you. We had a whole week ahead of us then, and now—!”

Sanna did not answer. They stood there silently, locked in an embrace that had already over it the long dark shadow of impending separation.

“Three years!” said Cartwright at last, as if speaking to himself.

“Oh,” she murmured childishly. “Three *years!* They don’t mean anything. It’s to-night and to-morrow, and the next day, and the day after that, and all the days after without you here, that frighten me!” Her voice sank, trembling. “My brother doesn’t—like you.”

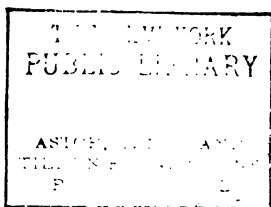
“Is that so?” said Cartwright in an odd voice. “I’ve been thinking something of



"IT'S TO-NIGHT AND TO-MOR-  
ROW, AND THE NEXT DAY  
.... THAT FRIGHTEN ME!"



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## *THE LOVERS OF SANNA*

the same sort myself." He put her gently from him, picked up his overcoat, jammed on his hat, and took a small black bag that stood near. "They'll be sending everyone off the ship in a moment. You can't possibly find your way from here alone. I'm going to take you home."

"But you can't!" cried Sanna, in alarm. "You wouldn't get back in time." She looked at him in bewilderment as he smiled, his dark eyes full of the reckless, boyish, triumphant daring that she knew so well, and that she felt now was bewitching her out of all reason; he stood with a rock-like immobility as she tried weakly to pull him from the door.

"I'm not coming back again," he announced. "I'm going to miss the ship."

"But Julian, Julian, you can't do that! You mustn't!" she protested, terrified. "Think of the consequences! Won't it militate against you?"

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“Oh, perhaps—for a day or two; but I’m going to pull things off all right, don’t you worry.” His brilliant eyes bespoke her confidence. “The company is going to take me on my own terms this time! I was a fool not to find that out before. Did you think I was going to let you stay here on the ragged edge of things for three years in your brother’s house, waiting for *me*? You shall never have anything to bear for me that I can spare you—never, never. I know a thing worth two of that!” His arms were around her again. “We’ll go down together by the regular line at the end of the month, if you’ll marry me before then, Sanna.” He looked at her eagerly. “What do you say to playing a pirate game and letting me carry you off in a couple of weeks for a rover’s life? If that’s too soon for you—” his tone reversed, despaired, resigned adoringly at a woman’s exigencies and reserve, “I’ll

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have to try and manage some other way. You can't snatch off a dear girl rudely like a cherry from a bough!"

Sanna did not answer. Her thoughts took swift tally of all her life that was gone, and that which was yet to come. Who more pathetically untrammelled than she, with fewer links to bind her fast? Bertha—Richard—she had taken leave of them, planned, lightning-swift, all the details of her departure. . . . She was being married to this man who had been a stranger to her until one short week ago; she was on the steamer by his side, they were sailing down into the tropics—the thought brought strange shivering thrills of an unknown happiness with it. *Oh, what was love anyway, that it took possession of one whether one would or no, twisting one as a reed is twisted by the wind, that, coming from some far source, has a power beyond one's knowl-*

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*edge or control! . . .* She saw herself growing to love him more and more, growing to depend on his love for her as on the very breath of life.

The noise of the jarring freight had stopped, there was only the rush of steam to be heard. She raised her head from its resting place to say with her heart in her voice:

"I'll love the pirate game with you!"

"Why, you Sweet Thing!" cried Cartwright, a little huskily. The color rushed to his face, he shook her with the delicious, passionately gentle playfulness of two nights before. "How do you always manage to say just the right words? Come, Sweet Thing, come! We must get along quickly now; I've just time to miss the ship!"

THE END

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